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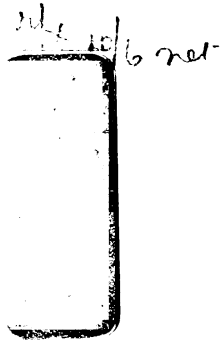

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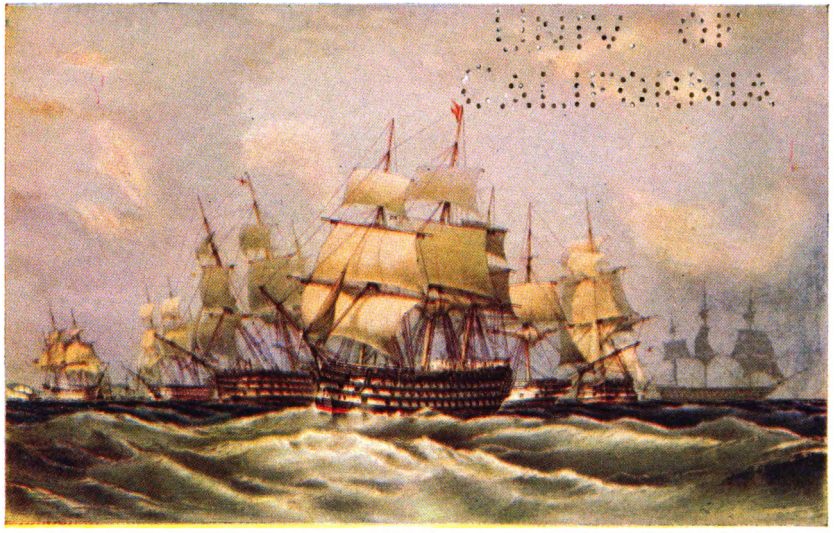

THE CHANNEL FLEET MAKING SAIL DOWN CHANNEL
MAY, 1846

(Lithograph by H. J. Vernon)

See p. 158

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CHATS ON NAVAL PRINTS

BY

E. KEBLE CHATTERTON

WITH 34 ILLUSTRATIONS

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

T. FISHER UNWIN LTD
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PREFACE

In the following chapters I have endeavoured to indicate one of those rare occupations of love which combines all the pursuit of beauty, and attracts the connoisseur, with a living interest in history as well as a delight in ships and seafaring.

For the collector of naval prints is in a category quite different from the amateur of china, or plate, or furniture. In itself any scarce and well-executed print, no matter the subject, is a joy to every person capable of sensitive response. The attraction is there whether we react or not. But in prints which are concerned with the old full-rigged ships, with momentous fleet engagements and single-ship actions, with the portraits of gallant and perhaps gouty and choleric old sea-dogs, whose daring and skill have saved England through year after year of crisis and made possible that world-wide organisation which we know as the British Empire, there arises a second interest which is just as enthralling as that which is artistic.

No more lovely creation of man than the old wooden ships, no subject more worthy of the painter or engraver could be conceived in the human imagination. In the specimens of all kinds

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of prints the reader will be able to see at once the fascination which is to be found in these naval illustrations by men who have long since passed away. In those days when wooden ships and steel engraving were able to progress without the urge of feverish haste, a craftsman took a pride and delight in his work which often enough have been communicated to those who make a hobby of collecting these pictures.

I have in the course of this work been indebted to *Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers;* to *A History of Engraving and Etching from the Fifteenth Century to the Year* 1914, and the monograph on Wenceslaus Hollar, both by Mr. Arthur M. Hind, Assistant Keeper in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum.

Finally, I have to acknowledge the courtesy of Messrs. T. H. Parker, 12A Berkeley-street, W., who have allowed me to reproduce some of the finest prints in their collection.

E. KEBLE CHATTERTON.

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I

INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

DURING the last twenty years, but especially since the end of the Great War, there has been an extraordinary and increasing interest taken in prints of naval actions, men-of-war, East Indiamen, clipper-ships, harbours showing old-time shipping, portraits of admirals, captains and seafarers generally of that bygone age when sails were still triumphant.

These prints are bought not merely for their artistic merits, but owing to the special sentimental reason that we have, with the disappearance of canvas and cordage, bestowed on old-time craft a veneration which belongs only to antiquity. The advent of the steamship epoch was bound to make contemporary pictures of early sailing ships more interesting as ocean-going became more and more a matter of steel and engines; every year saw the sailing ships becoming fewer, and every month any old painting or print of a vessel under a cloud of canvas became more like to some strange, romantic creation around which centred a halo and wonderful legends. Thus, in

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any case, as navigation developed further away from days of wooden ships, it was inevitable that their pictures, showing them as they really were when at sea and in their prime, would appeal in a particular manner to a generation accustomed to steam.

But it was the Great War which rapidly by gun, torpedo and mine destroyed all the remaining big sailing ships with the exception of a mere handful already moribund. Thus, more quickly than ever could have been anticipated, even a three-masted steel barque became almost as rare as a sedan chair, and just as suggestive of a banished period of history. Nor is that all. It needed those four years of warfare, with the food shortage at home and the uncertain military position abroad, to make people appreciate what the sea and ships mean in regard to physical existence. If the Navy were to vanish, away would disappear the Mercantile Marine: and if that went, starvation and defeat would follow in a very few weeks.

Therefore a new and fresh concern in seafaring of all sorts was born, and it dates from the year 1917, when the submarine peril was at its greatest. People began to think in terms of tonnage, landlubbers became immersed in the doings of sailormen, gallant exploits at sea were talked of with an enthusiasm that had lain dormant for over a century. And when the war was over there was left behind an entirely new zeal in regard to nautical history and marine pictures, an ardent interest which has

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manifested itself in the great number of books published on seafaring subjects since the Armistice, and the greatly increased prices which naval prints now attain in the open market.

The purchase of old marine paintings is the hobby of essentially a rich man: but the collection of a few prints after the great artists is something that appeals to every ship lover. On the other hand the competition is keener not merely because engravings are becoming fewer, but for the reason that in British homes there is a revival of taste in eighteenth-century furniture and eighteenth-century architecture. The golden age of the naval print was that eighteenth century when people realised that it was the Navy which alone could ward off the ever present danger of invasion. One has only to read private letters and diaries of about 1750 to realise how desperate in English minds was the situation. As the French had landed at the Isle of Man, so they might be expected on the south coast of England. It was the naval victories of Hawke, of Boscawen, and later on of Nelson which caused by reaction such merrymakings and drinking of healths, such extolling of the sailor home from the sea: and, presently, the engravers set to work in order that the victorious battle should be depicted for all time, that the gallant admirals should hand down their portraits to posterity, and that Jack should be commemorated coming ashore with well-filled purse to his village and family.

This present eighteenth-century interest, and the

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desire to obtain eighteenth-century engravings of naval battles, portraits of flag-officers, roysterous seamen and amorous swains, views of the old dock-yards, and of single ships under way in stately grandeur, all this revived fashion has caused the naval print to be sought after with greater keenness. But the scarcity has been still further accentuated by the demand which the United States now put forward. From the sixteenth century onwards it was the custom for wealthy Englishmen to obtain the best marine engravings from the Continent. Later on there grew up a British school of engravers surpassed by none, and of great productive power with the plate. The result was that until recently England was the world's storehouse for such artistic treasures. But the Great War has left Europe with a serious financial burden and the United States in a condition of supreme wealth, and it is to be noted that America is the principal art importer from British shores to the annual value of about £6,000,000, an increasingly large portion of this amount representing those naval prints which depict English history in its moments of greatest crisis.

In the homes of those great naval families which have reared British admirals in generation after generation; in many a private collection both small and large; occasionally, too, in out-of-the-way rural corners, one comes across these old shipping prints which cannot be contemplated without a thrill. We think of those Georgian days when Pitt

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was bringing into being an empire; when Dr. Johnson was busy with his lexicon; when smuggling was an organised industry; when the village church bells were rung for every victory over the French; when tea was fourteen shillings a pound and only just coming into fashion; when trade at home was bad, and Brighton was still the village of Brighthelmstone and its houses being swallowed up by the encroaching sea. It is impossible to regard these lovely old prints without linking up the deeds they commemorate to the conditions under which our ancestors were then living.

These engravings are nothing if they are not expressions of patriotism, of gratitude from the protected to the victors by sea. They represent the national sigh of relief after deliverance from invasion and defeat; and a complete collection of these prints is an epitome of the most eventful three hundred years of British history. There are few hobbies more absorbing and educative than this gathering together of old ships and men. And if the period is a comparatively short one before steam and cheap photographic processes changed the whole aspect of things, yet in these few years we have the apotheosis of sea-power expressed in contemporary art by men who were indeed artists in the truest sense. To-day's news-sheets are covered with every kind of pictorial illustration that can entertain a fickle and spoiled public. Let us not forget that in the days of the three-decker, the frigate and the muzzle-loader, these engraved

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illustrations were brought about only by slow and individual effort, yet with a resulting beauty that is permanent and highly esteemed.

That was the time when a ship was a creature of the greatest loveliness, when dignity was regarded as something superior to haste: and in these prints we shall see how worthily the engravers carried out the duty entrusted to them. In the following pages we see illustrated for us capital ships in battle, fleets at sea, pirates, privateers, slavers, East Indiamen, frigates, dockyards, naval costumes; in fact both the ship and the sailor under all the varying conditions of the service. The tendency recently has been for these prints to find their way into a few collections of great numbers. But every now and then there comes the occasion when these are broken up and dispersed. Those illustrations which are here reproduced have been selected in order that the enthusiast may obtain, whilst still they last, a fairly representative idea of the subjects available. It is, indeed, a matter for regret that our public collections of prints are so lacking in that very subject of the sea which has been the means of our rise to political and commercial greatness. Perhaps some day there will arrive a benefactor who will, before it is too late, ensure that an adequate collection of naval prints is presented for posterity to enjoy and admire for all time. Both the subject and the circumstances demand it.

For one of the pleasures of naval print collecting

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is that it takes us into a new world and uplifts the imagination right away from this mechanical age. We get right down to that fierce contest when ship and man fought the sea unaided by monster engines and ingenious gadgets. It is an experience, as we examine these old pictures, of going back almost to primitive methods as compared with modern life at sea. But apart from what we may learn as to naval architectural development, or rigging, or sail plans, in these reproductions, we get an insight into the nautical mind of the particular periods under consideration. Indeed, as we study marine artistic expression through the centuries, it is most entertainingly interesting to note a change in the attitude towards the sea, as the ability and confidence of the mariner increased or decreased.

One effect of the present age which is influenced by the power and seaworthiness, the size and speed of ocean-going vessels, is that marine artists approach their work in quite a different mood. In the earliest days one can see the artist's feeling of awe and sense of terror which the sea suggested in his mind. At a later stage, when ships were built better, and rigged more sensibly, and proved by their long voyages and safe return that even gales of wind could be weathered, you find the seventeenth-century Dutch craftsmen positively revelling in seafaring subjects, extolling the majesty and virility of the ship, inspiring confidence, as if at last the sea had been found tameable.

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And then in the following century you will notice, and the prints are there to prove it, that there was a certain convention which seemed to strive for the sensational, the dramatic, the adventurous and harrowing aspect of the sailor's life. Ships tossed about in storms with canvas blown out of the bolt-ropes, spars snapped off short, seas breaking over the side, rudder carried away, men dying in pityful postures: these were the features of seafaring which were introduced to make the public emotion stir from its shore lethargy. Or, if you look at some print showing the sinking of an old East Indiaman where women and children, soldiers and sailors are going down to their deaths in a very few moments, the artist seems to have aimed less at a truthful than a theatrical picture. For generations the stage also endeavoured to carry on this same tradition with conspicuous failure. We have just about come to the end of those futile attempts to present nautical subjects in the theatre, but the old idea has died hard. Has anything more ridiculous ever been witnessed than a property ship in distress, falling nightly into two exact halves on an impossible sea? It is only the prevailing landsmen's ignorance of nautical matters that has allowed such conventions to exist so long.

So, too, those prints of the press-gangs at work are so full of feeling and indignation, that we can sense the anger which was felt at the time. We see wretched, terror-struck tailors, scissors and tape measure still in their pockets, being led off by the

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press-gang under an officer with drawn sword in charge. Infuriated women are attacking the gang with mops and fists, hurling dreadful oaths, and the street is full of riot. Here was a subject for the engraver which appealed not for its beauty but for its associations suggested in the popular mind. Impressment in the mid-eighteenth century was pursued with such vigour that we can only wonder that internal unrest did not reach greater heights. If to-day, for instance, the illustrated papers were to print a picture of these gangs at work in the London streets, or of some homeward-bound merchant ship after being away several years in foreign waters but now stopped off Deal so that many of the home-longing crew might be carried off to serve in a battleship, there would be such a wave of public fury that would cause the downfall of any government.

When we read of the mutinous spirit in our eighteenth-century fleet we have to recollect that impressment, necessary as it certainly might be, was not calculated to bring about a happy ship. The men went afloat in a certain mood and the discipline was severe without being considerate, or sometimes even humane. Therefore we must, before we look at these naval prints, endeavour to transport ourselves right back to the years in which the artists worked. We must forget all about our own non-sinkable ships with their wireless and super-perfect navigational devices. These engravers were reflecting the feelings towards ships and the

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sea at those definite dates which are so vastly different from to-day.

Rather can we feel a sympathy for these shipmen feeling their way gradually and painfully towards making the man-of-war the perfect fighting machine and the most obedient of vessels to the hand of man in weather of all sorts. These prints exhibit what pride our ancestors possessed in their sailing ships, and if no other emotion is conveyed to us, at least they should cause one's sense of gratitude to become greater, having regard to what their officers and men did for us in order to make the world as prosperous and peaceful as it remained for a hundred years preceding the Great War. The æsthetic pleasure to be derived from these prints is another matter, but it is not less intense if it is the more obvious. And by a cycle in the taste of discerning minds, we have now reached the point when never were naval prints more sought after, and never did they reach such high prices in the whole history of engraving. This is the more interesting when we consider that cheap reproductions were never more numerous and obtainable than in this age of high-speed printing.

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II

EARLY NAVAL PRINTS

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CHAPTER II

EARLY NAVAL PRINTS

In its widest definition, engraving is the art of cutting lines on wood or metal, and the print is the impression left on paper after being in contact with the inked engraved plate. And we may divide these prints into the three classes—of woodcuts and wood-engravings, engravings and etchings on metal, and finally the more modern lithographs. Obviously the depiction of ships in any selected period was made in accordance with the contemporary art, but always we must remember that, with certain exceptions, the drawing or painting of marine subjects was extraordinarily neglected until the seventeenth century.

The reason for this neglect lies in the fact that seafaring has ever been one of the most highly technical of careers; that, except for such reasons as war, trade, and pilgrimages, land-dwellers did not usually venture afloat if they could possibly avoid it; and that it was not till after Elizabethan times, and ships began to be built of greater size and seaworthiness, that more and more the ocean ceased to be a terrifying monster, and merchants

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dared oftener to entrust themselves afloat. In a sentence, then, it was because the communities of sailors were numerically small until the seventeenth century; it was because people ashore cared not to be reminded of the dreaded sea, that they usually desisted from showing the ship in art.

We who are living in an age which is so full of marine activity find it a little hard to realise that as late as the seventeenth century the sailor was looked upon as a being quite different from the rest of humanity, and speaking in a strange tongue. "The sea language is not soon learned," wrote Monson, "much less understood, being only proper to him that has served his apprenticeship: besides that, a boisterous sea and stormy weather will make a man not bred on it so sick that it bereaves him of legs and stomach and courage, so much as to fight with his meat. And in such weather, when he hears the seamen cry starboard, or port, or to bide alooff, or flat a sheet, or haul home a cluling, he hears a barbarous speech, which he conceives not the meaning of." Even in mid-Victorian days there still existed that curious invisible bulkhead between the landsman and the seaman: nor is it yet entirely broken down. But the coming of the big steamship, the safe navigation across the seas, the tremendous increase of ocean travel, often for the sheer love of voyaging; these factors have done much towards spreading the marine instinct and thus employing art to show the ship at sea.

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But until the sixteenth century, if we wish to see what a ship looked like, we have to content ourselves with such representations as mural paintings, coins, seals, vases, sculptures, mosaics, tapestries, stained glass windows, books of hours and missals, with occasional but rare sketches in manuscripts. Even if we see the ship in some painting, it is there too frequently not for itself but as a secondary consideration, often enough in the background. And as a general rule you will find that most of these examples give a conventional rather than an accurate and lively idea of the ship, sometimes with impossible rigging and wrongly set sails—proof enough that the artist had neither knowledge of shipping nor sympathy with seafaring.

It was not until the fourteenth century that adequate amounts of paper were available in Central Europe, and therefore prints until then were out of the question. No paper impressions of woodcuts can be traced before the latter part of that century. But woodcuts were already soon to be used for producing playing cards, for printing pictures of our Lord's Passion and pictures of saints for pilgrims. In Germany and the Netherlands were the earliest woodcuts produced, and in the latter country at the end of the fifteenth century were issued the earliest " block-books " in which both text and illustrations were cut in the block. The influence of Netherlandish artists and craftsmen will be seen presently to concern our subject enormously.

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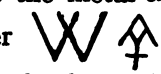
The earliest engraving on metal, decoratively, belongs to the art of the goldsmith and metal-chaser who took a rubbing of his incised work as many an enthusiast takes an impression of some old brasses in an historic church. The earliest dated print from an engraved metal plate is the year 1446, and the earliest German and Netherlandish engravers have been conveniently designated by the dates found on their work or by the title of their chief masterpiece. Thus, in the above instance, the engraver is known as "The Master of 1446," and others during this period are referred to as "The Master of the Death of Mary," "The Master of the Gardens of Love," but some are known by their signature such as "The Master B.M.," and "The Master A.G."

Now of this period was the metal-engraver who is known as "the Master  ," who was flourishing in the Netherlands about the year 1470, and was most prolific in his output, being famous especially for his engravings of Gothic architecture. But to us most valuable is the print which he has left showing in wondrous detail a Flemish carack of that period. Possibly "W.A." was copying some model in a local church, but at any rate he has afforded us most perfect knowledge of the rigging and masting of a late fifteenth-century ship. From this print a modern craftsman has with great artistic skill built a charming model of the carack,[1] which

[1] Reproduced in Plate 9 of my *Ship-Models*. London, 1923.

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is at present on loan in the Science Museum, South Kensington. Israhel van Meckenem of Bocholt, who died in 1503, was another early engraver who has enabled us still to see what a late fifteenth-century buss-ship looked like, and in the South Kensington Museum there is a print of such a craft showing such interesting details as the crutch for the mast when lowered, the fenders of the hull, the hoops for the awning, and so on. Illuminating, too, are the prints by Frans Huys after the Flemish painter, Pieter Brueghel, showing sixteenth-century Dutch warships, and the reader will find three of these prints on the walls of the above museum, as well as in other collections.

The linking of the Netherlands with Spain by the marriage of Philip, son of Maximilian of Austria, was to have important results not merely politically but commercially, for it enabled the Dutch to begin their world-wide trade by sea, and thus to rise both in wealth and ultimately in power. The founding of the Dutch East India Company was to solidify this commercial sea strength; but, even before that, the passing to and fro of the caracks from the Low Countries to Spain and the Mediterranean familiarised the Netherlanders with shipping, brought wealth, and created a demand which artists began to fill. The marine enthusiasm had not yet burst in its fullness, but it was beginning. It was impossible for ships and trade to prosper in a country so intersected by waterways and so nearly surrounded by sea, without inspiring also the desire

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to perpetuate shipping and craft now that in the sixteenth century numerous voyages, safely accomplished, begat an increasing faith instead of dread. Art cannot prosper without wealth, but now we begin to see the rise of those illustrious Dutch sea painters, whose works were so many years ahead of ours.

It is required of such an artist that he be experienced in the way of a ship on the sea, and no amount of theory can make up for his lack of practical nautical knowledge. And there is no marine artist of his time who satisfies one's mind so perfectly, who gives us so unsparingly those details of ships and rigging as Hendrik Cornelisz Vroom; and for the reason that will be presently apparent, he demands especial attention from us. I have closely studied his paintings in private and public collections, and his love of ships is undisguisable: he painted them not as accidents of composition, but because they deserved to form the whole picture.

Vroom's life was spent on or close to the sea, and the artist in him was hereditary. He was born at Haarlem in 1566, his father being a sculptor who died whilst Hendrik was still an infant. The widow married again, this time a painter on china, but the boy and stepfather so heartily hated each other that Hendrik ran away to Rotterdam, and for a time portrayed the local architecture. But presently he went to sea in a Spanish ship and visited St. Lucar and Seville, afterwards proceeding to Rome, where he was employed by Cardinal de

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Medici, and at length came back to Haarlem. Here he spent a period painting religious pictures, and again set out for Spain with the intention of selling his efforts. But off the Portuguese coast his ship was wrecked, though he was rescued, and enabled to reach Lisbon, where he set to work and painted the incident of storm and wreck through which he had so barely passed. With such success was this picture carried out that it was sold to a Portuguese for a large sum; and at last, having saved enough money, he once more came back to Haarlem that he might devote himself entirely to paintings of the sea, and it was about this time that Vroom's name came under the notice of the victorious commander-in-chief against the Spanish Armada. But before we come to that date we must see how the conditions were in England with regard to our immediate subject.

England, we must remember, in spite of all the Tudor splendour was not a rich country: therefore art could not flourish. It was this lack of prosperity and the need of finding new markets that inaugurated those trading companies and sent out those small expeditions of ships to Russia and elsewhere. The founding of the English East India Company was, in effect, the first big step to expand our Mercantile Marine and extend our commerce. In the Low Countries, trade, shipping and art were prospering; but in our country we had barely begun, and with regard to engravings we were a hundred years behind. For the earliest dated English engraving

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belongs to the year 1540, and most of them were at first done by settlers from the Netherlands, such as Thomas Geminus, a surgeon at the Court of Henry VIII. It is indeed a matter of the greatest historical regret that there had not yet arisen an English artist capable of painting or engraving those wonderful exploits of Drake and his contemporaries. In fact there was no one of our countrymen sufficiently skilled to depict the victory over the Armada. Seeing that Elizabethan literature is so rich in sea fare, it is pathetic that the narrative in pictures should be so deficient.

There is in the Print Room of the British Museum the well-known contemporary but anonymous engraving of Elizabeth's flagship, the *Ark Royal.* We have, too, such invaluable ship-pictures as that of the *Black Pinnesse,* which brought home the body of Sir Philip Sidney, the date of the print being 1587. There are also a number of portraits and title-pages to books such as were written for the encouraging of seamanship and gunnery. There is, further, in the British Museum an excellent print of an Elizabethan galleon belonging to about 1560, but on the whole good contemporary prints of ships belonging to Draconian times are extremely few.

It is, however, to be noted that seafaring and engraving are most closely connected historically. The increasing interest in discovery and travel led to the demand for maps and views, just as the achievement of some polar explorer or traveller

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to-day incites us to study his photographs and examine his maps. All this sixteenth-century confidence in the sea, and all those strange tales of new lands and curious peoples; all those high adventures and thrilling escapes told and retold in tavern and hall could not fail to set the imagination afire. Maps were immediately needed for the safety of the ships which were growing in size and numbers. The graphic expression of accumulated pilotage information must be set down, and in 1585 was published at Leyden, by Wagenaer, the first atlas. During this second half of the sixteenth century there flourished in the Netherlands three map engravers, Gerard Mercator, Jodocus Hondius, and Franz Hogenberg, who must now be considered. Gerard Mercator (1512–1594) was born at Rupelmonde in Flanders, his real name being Kremer, but he is most popularly known for the invention of his projection on which all charts are drawn. It was two years after his death that his collected engravings of maps appeared in his *Atlas Major*. Mercator had been appointed in 1552 cosmographer or map-maker to the Duke of Cleves, and it was Mercator who was the first to employ, for describing a map-collection, the name of that deity who was supposed to sustain the universe. But, if Mercator was a Fleming, we must not forget that the influence of his special art came across to England. His *Mappemonde*, containing a method of projecting a sphere on a plane, had appeared in 1569, and Wagenaer's charts of Dutch harbours

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and the Narrow Seas were so valuable that an English version soon appeared.

Jodocus Hondius was another Flemish engraver who left his influence on this period. Born in 1563, he came to England twenty years later, where he was employed in the engraving of maps and charts for the use of English shipping, and also produced a number of portraits. Eventually he crossed to Amsterdam, where he died in 1612, and among his works are to be noted those four maps which he engraved of Sir Francis Drake's West Indian voyage and were published at Leyden in 1588; Sir Francis Drake himself with two hemispheres; and some plates for Mercator's *Atlas Major*. In signing his plates, Hondius sometimes added a hound barking, in playful reference to his name, with the motto "sub cane vigilante." Hondius worked on engravings for John Speed's *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* of the year 1611, which was one of the most important English atlases of this period.

Another fine engraver was Franz Hogenberg, whose life is covered by the dates 1558–1590. There was now growing up that wonderful popularity of illustrated books dealing with travel and topography, and Hogenberg, who lived part of his time at Mechlin and Cologne, sojourned also in London. In the year 1588 the names of Hondius, de Bry, Augustine Ryther and others come before us as engravers of the charts in *The Mariner's Mirrour*, which had been first designed by that

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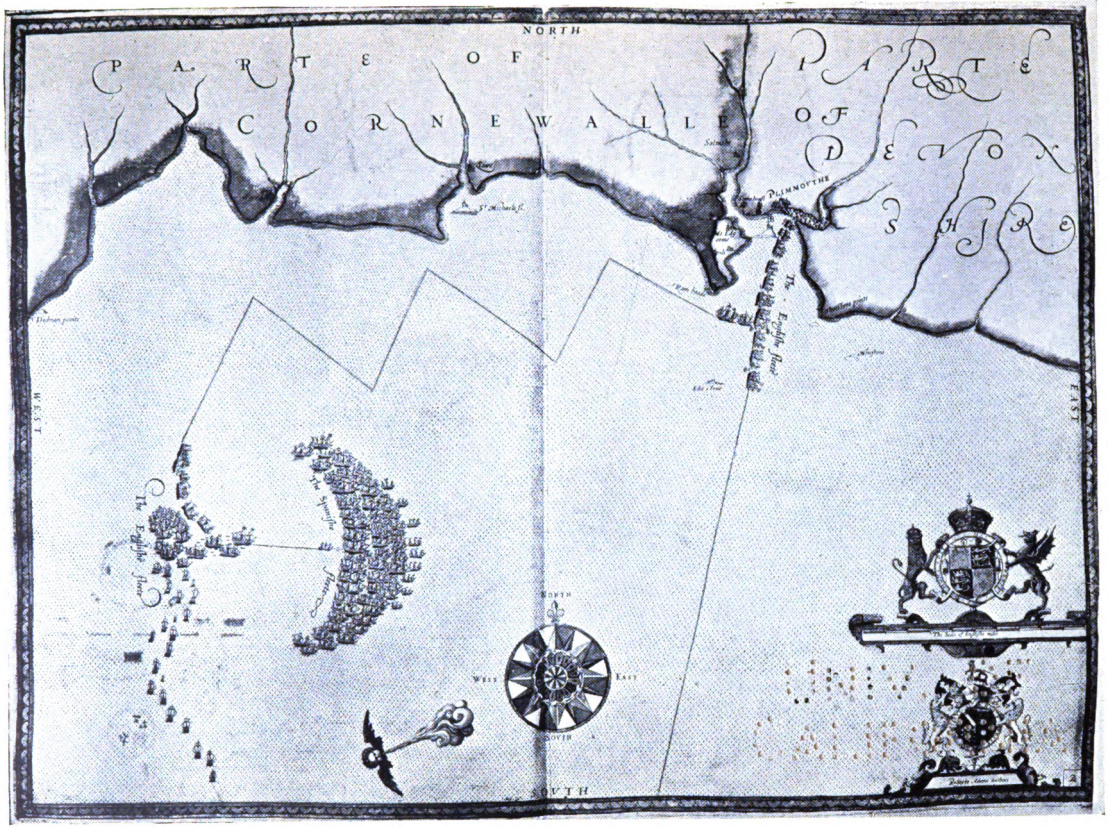

THE ARMADA AND THE ENGLISH FLEET OFF THE COAST OF CORNWALL.

(*From the Adams-Ryther engraving.*)

To face p. 34.

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famous Dutch navigator and geographer, Lucus Wagenaer. Ryther particularly interests us because now we are able to see Englishmen about to carry on that important work which had been learnt from men born in the Low Countries. Ryther was born at Leeds, was one of the earliest English engravers on copper; yet exactly when he was born or when he died it is impossible to say. But we do know that this Yorkshireman flourished between the years 1575 and 1592, also that he kept a print-seller's shop near Leadenhall, where he was associated with Christopher Saxton in engraving and publishing maps of Yorkshire and other counties.

Still, Ryther has a more special interest for us, and his name becomes prominent in connection with one of the most important naval events of history. After his famous victory over the Armada, Charles, second Lord Howard of Effingham and first Earl of Nottingham, was desirous of commemorating the event in tapestry to be made by Frans Spiering. It was not exceptional for intricate subjects at that time to be depicted in such a form, and in 1570 William Sheldon had woven maps of Yorkshire.

Now Spiering required reliable designs before these tapestries could be done, and Hendrik Cornelisz Vroom, being now recognised as a skilled painter of marine subjects, was commissioned by the admiral to come over to England and design the required panels at the price of a hundred florins. This work was accomplished, and Vroom then returned to Haarlem. Unfortunately these tapestries

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were burnt by that fire which destroyed the Houses of Parliament in October 1834. It is lucky, however, that engravings were made of these woven pictures, and thus we are still able to have authentic details of that great campaign. John Pine, His Majesty's chief engraver of seals, engraved a series of prints, and they were published by him in the year 1739. Pine was born in 1690, kept a print shop in St. Martin's Lane, London, and was a friend of Hogarth. The reader will find here reproduced the sixth of Pine's plates after Vroom, showing the English fleet to windward of the Spanish. Round the tapestry is an elaborate border containing portraits of Frobisher, Drake, Fenner and other distinguished comrades in the fight.

Now in many of these Vroom-Pine Armada subjects the composition leaves much to be desired, but it is in the plans of the various engagements as depicted by Robert Adams that we have the most accurate illustrations of these momentous sea-fights. For Adams, who was surveyor to Queen Elizabeth, designed a series of ten bird's-eye view plans showing with great clearness the dispositions of the rival fleets at various stages up Channel. These plans were engraved by Ryther and published about a year after the Armada campaign. Copies of Ryther's engravings were published by John Pine in his work on the House of Lords' tapestries; but in the British Museum are to be seen Adams's set of ten under the title *Expeditionis Hispanorum in*

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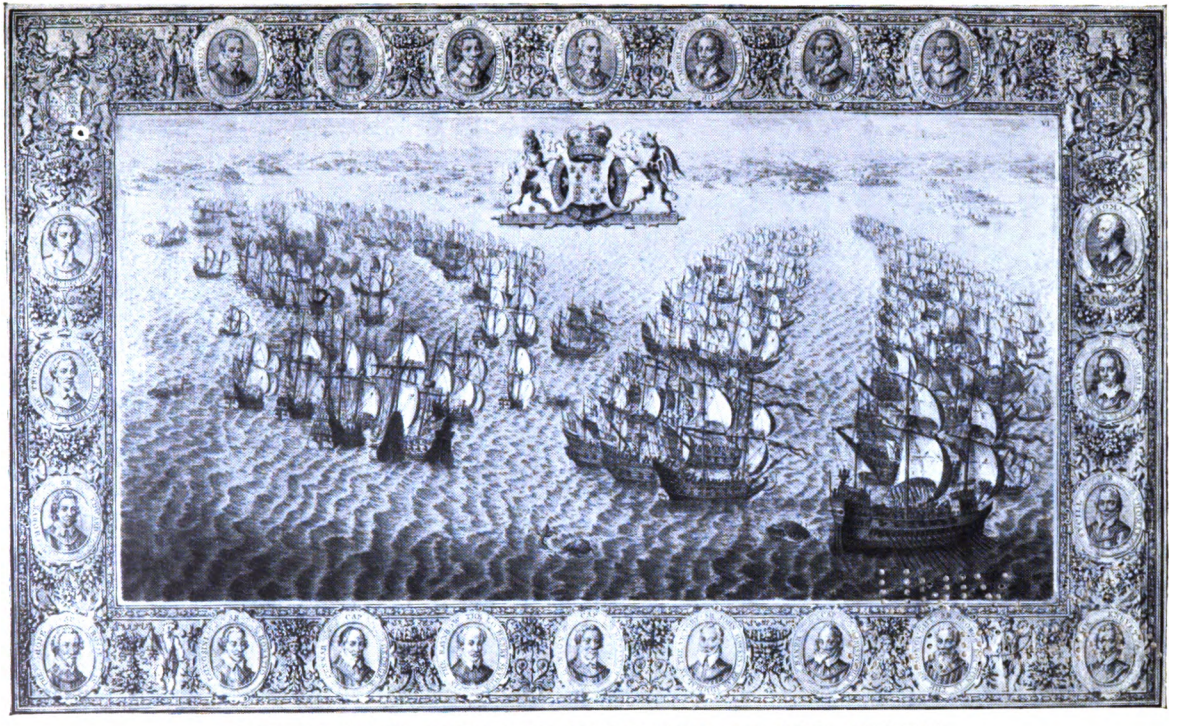

THE ENGLISH FLEET TO WINDWARD OF THE ARMADA.

(From Pine's engraving after the Spiering tapestry.)

To face p. 36.

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Angliam vera descriptio Anno D. MDLXXXVIII, and this sixteenth-century set of prints is now of great rarity and value. In 1590 Ryther published a translation of this work with his plans. Dedicated to Howard, Ryther apologises for his engraved plans, and writes, " If in the graven tables there be anything which doth not please thee in regard to the worke I crave pardon for it, because I count myself as yet but a yoong beginner."

The illustration facing page 34 is taken from the Adams-Ryther engraving in the British Museum, being therefore contemporary and earlier than Pine's copies of more than a century later. That which remains uncertain is whether Ryther's engravings were used as the basis of the designs drawn by Vroom, or whether these plans by Adams-Ryther were based on Vroom's designs. There is the third probability that Adams, Ryther and Vroom all conferred and collaborated. In the British Museum print room there is an engraving of 1612 by Cornelius Janssen after Vroom, showing a Dutch ship. Ryther, however, was primarily an engraver of maps, and the shipping was a secondary consideration. But the time had not yet been reached when English engravers, or for that matter English painters, were able to devote themselves to sole expression of the ship apart from surrounding interests. Much had been learned from the Low Countries, and the demand for land maps and sea charts was giving employment to such engravers as H. Cole, R. Lyne and B. Wright: but now in the following

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chapter we shall observe a great advance on the Adams-Ryther method of showing ships engaged in sea-fights. In the Adams designs the aspect is conventional, but presently the ship comes into reality, vivid and credible, and independent of the affair in which she happens to be engaged.

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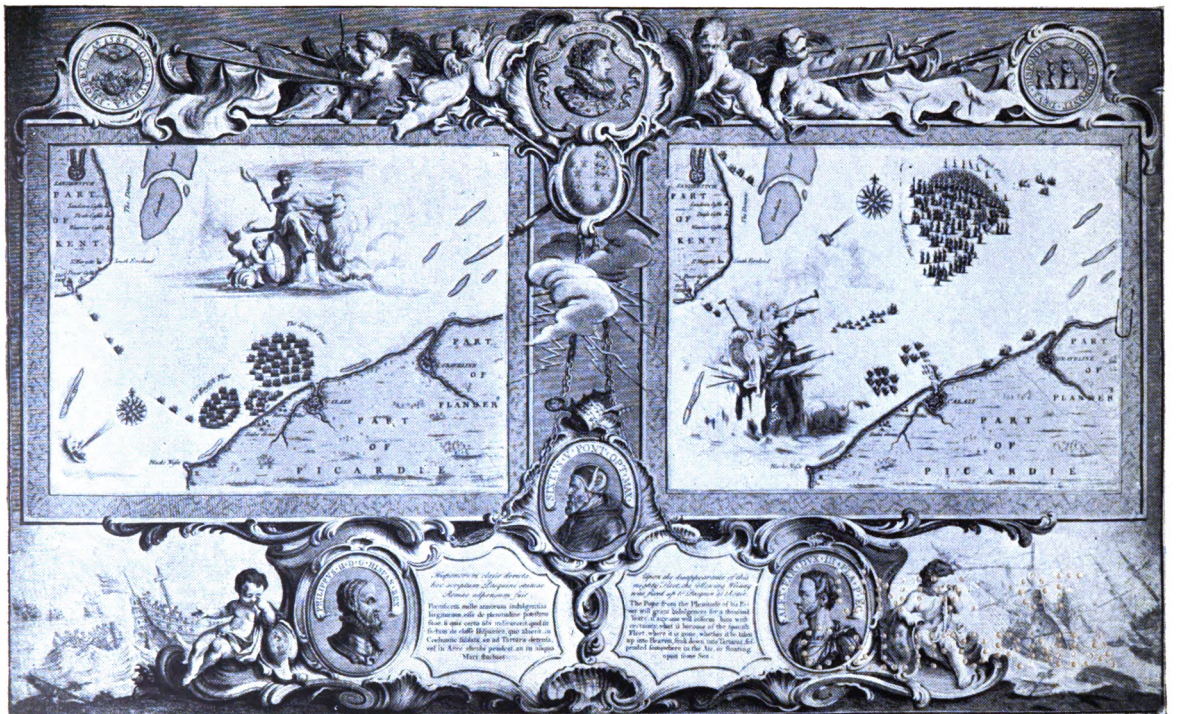

THE ARMADA OFF CALAIS.

(*From Pine's engraving after Rythe*r.)

To face p. 38.

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III

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SEA PRINTS

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CHAPTER III

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SEA PRINTS

IMMEDIATELY does this become clear when we compare the Armada pictures with that here shown of *The Mary Rose Engagement* by Hollar, who, foreigner though he was by birth and ancestry, became an English engraver who went to sea in English ships, and has left for us engravings of early seventeenth-century vessels that are most illuminating.

Born at Prague in 1607, the son of a lawyer, Wenceslaus Hollar lived seventy years. As a mere schoolboy he took delight in drawing maps, but, after leaving Prague and declining to follow his father's profession, Hollar went to Frankfort and received his first regular instruction in etching, this period of his life being covered by the dates 1627 to 1629. Afterwards he worked at Strassburg and Cologne. It was whilst in Cologne that Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, famous as an art connoisseur, came in contact (whilst on an embassy to Ferdinand II) with Hollar, and attracted him to his suite. This embassy lasted until the end of 1636, and then came back to England, Hollar being

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employed for the next few years etching plates after the works of art in the Earl's collection.

Hollar was also doing work for the London print-sellers, and in 1639 was appointed drawing master in the Royal Household. His well-known *Ornamentus Muliebris Anglicanus*, a collection of plates showing the costumes of contemporary English-women, need not detain us, nor need we consider his etchings of English architecture, nor of the works by Holbein, Titian, Van Dyck and other masters. After a period in Antwerp, Hollar returned to England in 1652, and was kept busily employed by the booksellers etching numerous plates, receiving twelvepence an hour and lodging in a printseller's house.

Now in the year 1662, as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II, Tangiers, that North African seaport, had been ceded to England. It was six years later that Lord Henry Howard was sent to Tangiers, and with him was despatched, at the Crown's expense, Wenceslaus Hollar in order to make sketches of the town and its fortifications. Hollar remained some time at Tangiers, made numerous drawings, and did some seventeen plates, of which the original sketches are in the British Museum.

These engravings are very pleasing, and show Tangiers with its buildings, its mole and its shipping as if seen from the sky. Indeed, they remind one of nothing so much as those pictures photographed from the modern aeroplane. The first of this

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series bears the inscription: "Divers Prospects in and about Tangier Exactly delineated by W. Hollar, his May^ties designer A° 1669, and by him afterwards to satisfie the curious, etshd in Copper." This commission took Hollar over a year, for which he received the sum of £100, and then at the beginning of December 1669 the time came for him to return to England. But it was to be an adventurous voyage which narrowly escaped ending disastrously. Let us quote Hollar's own words, remembering that those were the days when the pirates of Algiers were still immensely strong and equally daring, so that never was shipping in the Mediterranean safe, and many a fine English or Dutch vessel, well-armed and well-manned, had been captured and the crews condemned to Moorish slavery. Any voyage to Tangiers was therefore fraught with considerable risk, but now the voyage home was about to begin.

"Anno 1669, in the beginning of December," wrote Hollar, "His Excellency the Lord Ambassador Henry Howard, having obtain'd from the Emperor of Barbary, Tassaleta, a Letter of Security, to his content, had resolv'd to prosecute his Journey to the Court; to which end, he order'd his Baggage, and most of his Retinue, to be embarq'd in the *Mary Rose*, which had transported him from England." "Thus accordingly we set Sail on Wednesday the eighth of the said Month, at two a clock in the morning, with the Wind at North-East, along the Shore of Barbary; and having past

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Arzila that Evening, after Midnight, we overtook a great Flyboat of 300 Tuns; and finding her to be an English Vessel, fraighted with Deal, Masts, Salt, and Tobacco, coming from New-England, or those Parts, and taken by the Algier Men of War off of the Cape St. Vincent, being bound for Cadiz, we took, and made Prize of her; and having found 22 Turks aboard her, and three Christians, one a Russian, and two Englishmen, we transported them aboard us, and sent other Men aboard her; and having examin'd the Principal of them, found them to belong to a Squadron of Algier Men of War, who were Cruising in those Seas: But the Prize being heavy loaden, and a bad Sailer (insomuch that we were forc'd to tow her) did much prolong our Voyage, as that we could not arrive till Saturday at Noon before Salee."

In command of *Mary Rose* was Captain Kempthorn, who after calling at Salee on the coast of Morocco, and having sent the steward and others ashore, was compelled to put to sea without them, for these men had been detained, and there was a gale springing up. After cruising about in heavy weather, *Mary Rose* on December 15th sighted a Turkish man-of-war chasing a Spanish ship, but the pirate fled on the approach of Captain Kempthorn's craft. On the seventeenth "came to us a French Canary Man, bound for Cadiz; by and by, a Scotchman, from the same place: We saw also two Turks Men of War; therefore those two Ships came to us for Protection. Next morning at break

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of day we discover'd seven Turks Men of War; and because their Course was towards, therefore all possible Preparation was made aboard us for the Fight, and all that might be hurtful, or hinder us, remov'd, and thrown overboard, and our aforesaid Prize forsaken, the Men taken aboard into the *Mary Rose*, and the Ship let drive before the Wind."

These Turkish vessels were fine, able, well-built craft, which had once been the pride of England and Holland. One of them, named the *Half Moon*, still retained on her stern a semi-lunar or crescent decoration. Another vessel, named the *Orange Tree*, had such a decoration in the same place; the *Seven Starrs* was carved in keeping with her name. The *White Horse* displayed such an emblem. In addition to these four, the Turks had in their squadron the *Hart* and the *Golden Lyon*. It is these six vessels which were to assault *Mary Rose*, and with great strength. For each of the Algerine vessels was armed with 28, 30, 34, 36, and even 40 guns, manned by a crew of 240 to 400, many of whom would be European Christian slaves. The Turkish Admiral flew his flag in the *Golden Lyon*, the Vice-Admiral being in the biggest ship, the *Half Moon*. The latter was a slow sailer and "lagg'd about an English Mile behind the rest; so that they were forc'd to stay for her, and to send out two Boats Mann'd to tow her. Our Captain seeing that, who was near betwixt them both, sent also a Boat with Men to intercept theirs, which caus'd a

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small Skirmish among them; but when we saw that the Turks put out another Boat strongly provided, our Captain commanded to make a waft for our Men to come back again."

There ensued a partial engagement, which was interrupted by night coming on. Captain Kempthorn, in spite of the superior strength of his foes was determined they should not think him a coward, and hung out lights "that they might see where we were; and so having taken some rest the same night, early in the morning we were alarm'd again; and having perform'd Solemn Prayers, immediately every one repair'd to his Station, for they were coming: And all things being well order'd, especially that every other Gun should be fir'd at every Ship, to preserve the rest for the second; by which means, every one of the Turks Men of War receiv'd a sufficient opposition. We had also, besides our ordinary Ships Crew, about 70 Land-Soldiers of Tangier, and about 40 of his Excellencies Retinue; in all about 250 Men."

It is not often that so capable an artist is present on such an occasion: indeed, one cannot but be thankful that Hollar has been able to show us both the ships and the enemy's formation. If ever a man narrowly escaped being condemned to Algerine servitude it was this engraver, who on his arrival in England etched a plate the following year for Ogilby's *Africa*, and this print is here reproduced, showing the action which was now to begin. The detailed care with which

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Hollar has drawn the ships and their rigging shows the great interest which he expended on commemorating an incident he never forgot, though he lived for three score years and ten. In this print we see the six Turkish ships to windward and in single-line-ahead, led by the *Half Moon*, with the other flagship, *Golden Lyon*, in the rear. To leeward of them in the centre is *Mary Rose*, with those four smaller vessels "a Pinck, which came with us from Tangier, bound for Salee" (E), a Hamburg merchantman (B), a Scotch merchantman bound for Cadiz (D), and Captain Kempthorn's bomb ketch *Rose*, marked (C). To the north-west was a French merchantman making a fair wind of it, and to the south-east, on the horizon, the *Price* being followed by the *Rose Leaffe*.

"Thus began the Fight with a great courage," says Hollar; "and they coming in a Line from the South-East Quarter, the *Half-Moon* was the foremost; and having come within Pistol-shot, gave us his Small-shot, and his Broad-side, and receiv'd as much from us, and then having pass'd, bore off a little toward the Starboard, North-East; the same order kept all the rest, the *Golden-Lion*, or Admiral being in the Rere, with intention to board us: After we had receiv'd these five Broad-sides, even as he was coming up, with more Sails spread than the rest, he receiv'd a Shot betwixt Wind and Water, and another which tore his Main-Sail from end to end, and being thus disabled, stood off." This was the climax of the whole engagement,

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for, Hollar adds, "His Companions seeing that, tack'd about, and compassing round, went away fore the Wind with all speed, which put an end to the Fight, God be thanked." During the fight Captain Kempthorn had additional anxiety in respect of that pink marked (E), for this vessel "having aboard a number of Jews, Armenians, and the like Companions, having during the Fight revolted against the Master of the Vessel, endeavour'd to comply with the Turks, and having given some Signal, bore towards them: they mistrusting it to be a Fire-ship, began to avoid; but our Captains providence hinder'd that Design. There were kill'd aboard us 11 Persons, 17 wounded, and the Ship much dammag'd. The next day in the evening we arriv'd in the Bay of Cadiz."

This print is one of the most interesting of Hollar's examples, but for subtle atmospheric effect nothing could surpass his *View of the Spanish, Dutch and English Fleets off Deal*, belonging to the year 1640. It is in such pictures, with his delicate and economical delineation of spars that he reaches a rank superior to what one finds in his less vivid portraits. Hollar was a most industrious worker, his subjects covering architecture and topography in addition to sea fights, costumes and portraits, and most of it is in pure etching. That which additionally attracts us in such prints as Hollar's pictures of Tangiers, and is so characteristic in these early engravers of maps and charts and topography, is the pictorial effect which is given to the subject. In Robert Adams's

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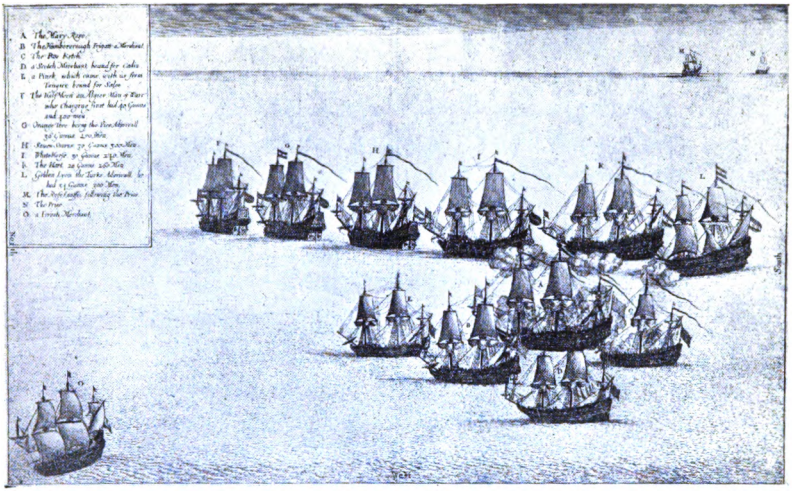

THE *MARY ROSE* ENGAGEMENT.

(*From the print by W. Hollar.*)

THE VICTORIOUS SEA FIGHT OF THE DUTCH AGAINST THE ENGLISH.

(*Engraved by Justus Danckerts.*)

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Spanish Armada plans the wind becomes personified by a cherub's face and wings. So, too, nymphs are used for rivers, as ships and towns become real rather than abstract.

Hollar died in 1677 in utter poverty, and years afterwards many of his plates were printed in great numbers by various printsellers. The connoisseur will therefore be on the look-out not for those of his prints which are but indifferent impressions, and are worth less than £10 apiece—even the early ones and the rarest examples of this prodigious worker are bought for not more than twice that price—but any real amateur of ships anxious for good cheap etchings and influenced by intrinsic rather than commercial value might well begin with prints by Hollar.

If in the Netherlands they had for a time been ahead of us English in the separate arts of the shipmen and the engravers, a fresh impetus naturally followed owing to those eventful years of the Anglo-Dutch wars, when naval tactics and the handling of squadrons began to be conducted on a scientific basis. Two of the many examples belonging to this period sufficiently indicate the kind of method employed to depict important naval occasions. The first is entitled *The Victorious Sea Fight of the Dutch Against the English* during the famous four days' encounter at the beginning of June 1666. This line engraving was published by Justus Danckerts, a Dutch engraver at Amsterdam, and depicts that action which went on in the area

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between the North Foreland and Dunkirk. The Dutch artist has indicated the ships of his nation by letters and the English vessels by numbers, and it will be recollected that this was a series of actions continued for a longer period than any in the history of naval warfare, with the sole exception of the Armada incidents. At night the rival fleets were busy repairing the damage done by day, and then morning saw them renewing the combat with increased vigour. The Dutch commander-in-chief, de Ruyter, whose flagship, marked (A), is shown in the foreground on the left of the picture, was for a time in imminent danger. Monck, with a numerically inferior fleet, was apprehending annihilation, when, on the third day, Prince Rupert arrived with his fleet at a time of crisis; only sixteen of Monck's ships being still in a fighting condition. The Prince's reinforcements are indicated in the background on the left. On the fourth day the Dutch, content with the advantages gained, retreated towards their own waters, but that same evening the English admirals, acknowledging defeat, withdrew. Tromp and de Ruyter had beaten Prince Rupert and Monck, yet it was one of those defeats which in no sense can be regarded as dishonourable, and the handling of Monck's fleet was admired not least by even the Dutch themselves. A score of our vessels had been captured and sunk, others had been disabled, two of our admirals had been taken prisoners, and Ayscue's *Royal Prince* had the misfortune to get ashore on the Galloper

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and been compelled to surrender. De Ruyter, too, had lost both ships and some of his best officers in this long encounter, so we can well understand the importance of the subject in the mind of the contemporary engraver.

It is interesting to note how engraving, etching, printselling, drawing and painting continued in the same Netherlandish families for generations. One might take the Parcelles family as an instance. Jan Parcelles was both painter and etcher who excelled in such subjects as gales, shipwrecks and calms off the Dutch coast, illustrating the interesting fishing boats and shipping of his time. Born at Ghent in 1597, he lived at Haarlem from 1622 to 1680, and died soon afterwards; but, as showing the succession in the art of marine painting now becoming so important, let us mention that he was a pupil of that distinguished native of Haarlem, Hendrik Cornelisz Vroom. Parcelles had a son, Julius, born in 1628, and so carefully did the father instruct him that it is difficult to tell the work of the senior Parcelles from that of the junior.

In the same way a good deal of confusion has grown up in connection with the Visscher family. Claes Jansz Visscher, the Dutch engraver, who was born at Amsterdam in 1580, and sometimes marked his plates "C.I.V.", was also a printseller like his father before him. Cornelis Visscher, another engraver and draughtsman, was born at Amsterdam about 1620, dying fifty years later. His technical ability as a line engraver is of the very highest.

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His brother Jan was fifteen years younger, and died just about the close of the seventeenth century. Among the best plates by Jan Visscher was a portrait of Admiral de Ruyter. A year older than Jan was his brother, Lambert Visscher, who is remembered for his engraving of Cornelis Tromp, Vice-Admiral of Holland. No one in those days could live in the neighbourhood of Amsterdam without being brought into daily contact with the shipping world. If the conversation were not concerned with the Dutch East Indiamen or the North Sea herring fleets, there always seemed to be a war with England either in progress or about to take place.

In the year 1667, a date that can never be contemplated by Englishmen without shame, it came to the ears of the Dutch admirals that England was no longer expecting war, and was quite unprepared. Then sailed the Dutch fleet up the Thames, and on the evening of June 10th into the Medway, capturing Sheerness, and advancing up the river where the ships of Charles II's navy were lying in Gillingham Reach (that old Elizabethan anchorage), unmanned, without guns or ammunition. On the 12th de Ruyter was able to take sixteen of our vessels, including the flower of the fleet, *Royal Charles*; the royal arms and the poop lantern from which are still exhibited in the Rijks Museum, Amsterdam, as a reminder of what it means not to be prepared. This was the last time that the Thames estuary was invaded by enemy craft until

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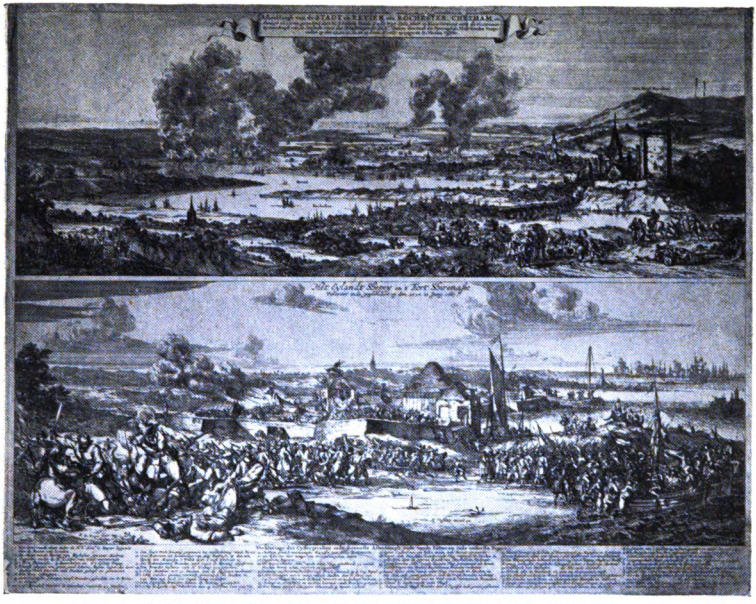

DUTCH INVASION OF THE MEDWAY.

THE UPPER PICTURE SHOWS THE SHIPPING ON FIRE BETWEEN CHATHAM AND SHEERNESS. THE LOWER PICTURE SHOWS THE LANDING AT SHEERNESS.

(*Engraved by Romeyn de Hooge.*)

SLAAN DER FRANSEN UYT T CANAAL DOOR DE ENGELSE EN HOLLANDERS. ANNO 1692 DEN 29 MEY EN VOLGENDE DAGEN VOORGEVALLEN
RUINEERDEN DER FRANSEN OORLOG-SCHEPEN, &c. TE LA HOGUE, CHEERBOURG, ORNAY &c.
Verhael van het Slaen, Verjagen en Vernielen der Franse Vloot onder Monſ. de Tourville, Admirael, door de
Gecombineerde Engelse en Neerlantse Vlooten, onder Mylord Russel en den Hr. Almonde, Admiralen, den 29,30,31 Mey,1,2,3 Juny 1692.

BATTLE OF LA HOGUE.

THE UPPER PICTURE SHOWS THE BATTLE PROCEEDING, AND THE LOWER PICTURE SHOWS MANY OF THE FRENCH SHIPS WRECKED.

(*Engraved by Romeyn de Hooge.*)

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came German Zeppelins, aeroplanes and submarines nearly two centuries and a half later. Now of this Medway invasion by de Ruyter we have an excellent contemporary Dutch line engraving by Romeyn de Hooge, who was then just twenty-one years of age. And this print here reproduced was published by one of the Visschers.

Romeyn de Hooge is another instance of art running in the family, being a nephew of that restful Dutch painter, Pieter de Hooch or Hooge, whose "superb, quiet painting," as Ruskin called it, with its cheerful interiors and sunlit courtyards, made him one of the glories of the Dutch school. Romeyn is acknowledged as a great genius in the engraving art, and as we examine the accompanying reproduction we can see how refined is his work, how delicate his distance, how full of life and action is each part of the picture. To the collector such a print as this is worth anything up to £15 to-day. The upper part of the print shows the Medway looking down the river from Rochester. Off Upnor Castle the *Loyal London*, the *Royal James* and *Royal Oak* are seen on fire, and other ships are ablaze farther down towards Sheerness. In the lower picture a very spirited record is given of the landing at Sheerness with the fleet in the background, and there is a wealth of detail that awaits only careful consideration on the part of the nautical archaeologist. Such matter, for example, as the sails of the sloop-rigged craft landing troops; the flags, the fenders on the quarters; and even the grapnel-shaped

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anchors on the shore indicate the studied care of the artist striving to be accurate.

The Anglo-Dutch wars came to a close with the Peace of London, signed in February 1674, and in 1692 there was again a threatened invasion of England, but this time from France. On this occasion the English and Dutch fleets were not enemies, but fought as allies under Sir Edward Russell, defeating the French under de Tourville at the Battle of La Hogue. Of this battle de Hooge's engraving is here reproduced also. In the upper part of the picture the fight is seen proceeding in the English Channel, whilst below are seen many of the French ships wrecked or on fire. In the foreground of the lower portion is shown the exquisite stern of *L'Ambitieux*, flagship of Vice-Admiral La Vilette. Well may we envy the delight and privilege of living in a period when ships were never so decorated with carvings and ornate with gilt. Most skilled as France's naval architects had become, it is from the defeat at this battle that the decline of the French Navy gradually but surely set in.

It is, however, a fact that after La Hogue there followed some months when the English Navy was considerably neglected, and the French used great diligence to strengthen theirs, so that over a hundred ships were ready for sea. We are now in the year 1693, and de Tourville, once again allowed to be in command, proceeded to the coast of Spain in order to lie in wait for a large fleet of merchantmen known to be sailing for the eastern end of the

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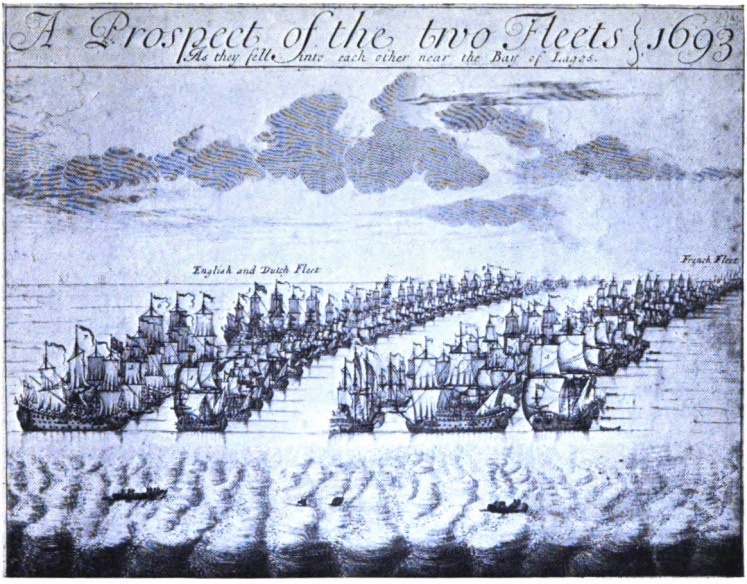

THE ANGLO-DUTCH AND FRENCH FLEETS OFF LAGOS.

THE FORMER UNDER REAR-ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE ROOKE.

(Engraved by Michiel Van der Gucht.)

A SEA ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AND ALGERINES. (See p. 77.)

(From the coloured line engraving by Pierre Fourdrinier.)

To face p. 54.

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Mediterranean. English merchants, in spite of their anxiety to send their vessels to the Levant, had been compelled to suffer delay whilst waiting for an escort. Finally four hundred valuable vessels were sent in convoy under the weak protection of a squadron consisting of only thirteen English, Dutch and Hamburg units, under Rear-Admiral Sir George Rooke, who had participated at the Battle of La Hogue.

The whole fleet was allowed to advance down the Bay of Biscay till it reached those waters off Cape St. Vincent, already historic for the exploits of Drake, and eventually to become famous for the deeds of Jervis and Nelson. Off Lagos de Tourville was waiting, and here he hoodwinked Rooke. Sending out at first a small squadron which retreated and left one or two vessels in Rooke's hands, de Tourville conveyed the suggestion that the French fleet was weak. Rooke continued his progress, hoping to take his convoy into Cadiz, but on the morning of June 16th de Tourville, with his hundred ships, was barring the way three or four miles to windward. The situation for the British admiral, responsible for that vast and valuable company of merchant ships, was enough to try his seamanlike resource and tactical skill to the full. De Tourville's strategy had certainly predestined the result of any battle that might take place.

Rooke therefore ordered the merchantmen to scatter, he himself keeping as a screen between them and the enemy. By these instructions, aided by

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the French inability to reap the full fruits of opportunity, most of the convoy reached Cadiz, some sailed north even to Ireland, others went into Malaga, and as far south as Madeira, but thence making their way home. In spite of this, about a hundred, including merchantmen, Dutch and Hamburg men-of-war, were destroyed, involving great loss to our prestige and over a million and a half sterling as well. The one bright side of the incident was Rooke's skilful performance in having saved three-quarters of the entire fleet. Now such an event as this could not fail to present itself as a suitable subject for illustration. In a somewhat crude and uninspired way, Michiel Van der Gucht accomplished this; and in the accompanying reproduction he has endeavoured to show *A Prospect of the Two Fleets as they fell into Each Other near the Bay of Lagos*. Such an engraving, with its lifeless ships and lack of imagination, cannot stand comparison with those prints such as we have been considering by Hollar and de Hooge.

Van der Gucht, who was born at Antwerp in 1660, was another of those artists that had come over to work in London; and he was employed chiefly by booksellers, making illustrations for their publications. This Fleming engraved a number of portraits, and became the master of that other engraver, George Vertue, finally ending his days in Bloomsbury during the year 1725. But one of the best known naval prints belonging to the seventeenth century is Payne's engraving *The True*

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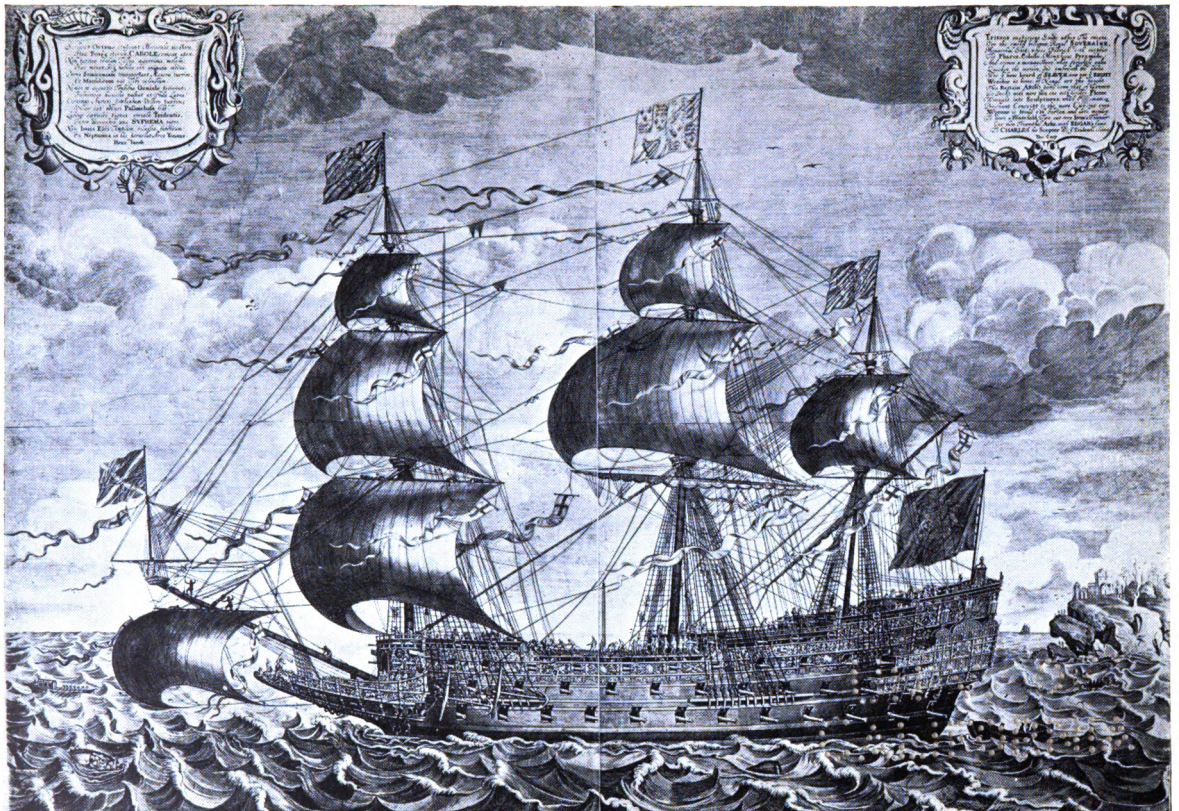

"THE TRUE PORTRAICTURE OF HIS MATIES ROYALL SHIP THE *SOVERAIGNE* OF THE SEAS."

(*Engraved by John Payne.*)

To face p. 56.

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Portraicture of His Ma^tes Royall Ship the "Soveraigne" of the Seas, which is here reproduced. John Payne was born in 1620, but died in his twenty-eighth year. He has been estimated in some quarters as an imitator and not more than a fair engraver; and elsewhere as a genius. It is true that he was lazy, dissipated, and died in want. We can pass over his engravings of portraits, but this print of a contemporary ship is extraordinarily rich of detail and of the greatest possible interest. George Vertue said that it was engraved on two plates, and when joined together measured 3 feet long and 2 feet 2 inches high. Heywood, in his account of the *Soveraigne*, published in the year after she was built, makes actual reference to this engraving. The *Soveraigne* had been launched when Payne was seventeen years old, had been designed by Phineas Pett and built at Woolwich under the supervision of Peter Pett. A vessel of over sixteen hundred tons, she was the largest that had ever been built in England up till that date, and was the admiration of both France and the United Provinces. Originally she was a three-decker, but she was cut down later on. After taking part in most of the engagements during the Anglo-Dutch wars, she was accidentally burnt at Chatham in 1696 through a boatswain's carelessness.

In the British Museum are several prints of Dutch battles by Thierry Roderigo Dirck Stoop, a marine painter and engraver, among whose etchings

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may be mentioned a bird's-eye view of Solebay, which was fought off Southwold on June 3 and 4, 1665. But in that same collection is a most interesting sketch by William van de Velde, actually made on the spot from aboard a Dutch yacht, showing the fleet becalmed and waiting on June 2nd for the battle which was to begin at 3.30 a.m. the following morning. And it is fitting that at this stage we should emphasise the fact that from the Van de Veldes' influence, especially, there was to grow up ultimately a school of English marine painters which was never more active than in the present day.

William van de Velde, the elder, born at Leyden in 1610, was that rare combination a sailor-artist, having been to sea in his early days; but already before he was of age he had become a fine artist in black and white of sea subjects. And when the States of Holland placed at his disposal a yacht for the purpose of depicting sea fights, they were in effect creating the precedent of the first naval war correspondent. And then, you will remember, Charles II invited him to England, where he arrived in 1675, and was still receiving a pension when he died in 1693. How many who pass along Piccadilly realise that he lies buried in St. James's Church?

William van de Velde the younger, son and pupil of the above, came across with his father to London, and received £100 from Charles II for painting sea fights which the elder Van de Velde had sketched. This family is yet another of those instances where

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so many members were artists and doing similar work; for Cornelius, son of the last mentioned, reproduced several of his father's works at the beginning of the eighteenth century in London; and Adriaen, son of the elder William, besides painting battle-pieces, Dutch coast scenes and landscapes, was also an etcher. It was Renier (or Remigius) Nooms—commonly called Zeeman—who is also supposed to have worked for a time with the elder Van de Velde. Nooms was another of those artists which Amsterdam brought forth, his period being covered by the dates 1612–1673, and he etched three plates dealing with naval fights of 1673 when the English and French were fighting as allies against the Dutch. Nooms also made a number of other plates whose subjects included the Dutch herring-fleets, shipping and seaports, a dozen of his views of shipping being published in London by Ar. Tooker.

It was all this seafaring activity—its East Indiamen, its fleets of herring busses, its gilded and carved yachts, its squadrons of stately high-pooped men-of-war—that during the seventeenth century had raised the Netherlands to such a state of wealth and given so much encouragement to those who could paint and engrave marine subjects. Such men as Jan van de Capelle (1624–1679), Johannes Lingelbach (1625–1687), Ludolf Backhuysen (1631–1708), William (or Wigerus) Vitringa (1657–1721), and many other artists of that memorable century, as Jacob Bellevois, Abraham Storck, Adam Wil-

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laerts, Jan Josephsz van Goyen, Abraham Hendricksz van Beijeren, Gerrit Pompe have left us by contemporary painting, by plate, or by both means the most exact pictures of every kind of vessel that sailed the seas in their own days. We thus have no longer to bewail lack of that information which would have been so illuminative of Tudor and earlier shipping.

Artists were becoming more prone to travel, and therefore able to paint the vessels of southern Europe no less than those of the North Sea. Lingelbach, for instance, had been born at an inland port, Frankfort-on-Main; but at twelve years of age went to Amsterdam, thence to Rome, and afterwards to Amsterdam again, where he died. Lingelbach among other subjects painted Italian seaports, which were engraved by Zylvelt and Gronsvelt; but he himself made a number of etchings of seaports after his own sketches. For a full appreciation of the vast amount of marine pictorial information one must spend very many hours in the galleries and museums of Holland; indeed otherwise it is impossible to get the spirit of that seafaring age, when the fore-and-aft rigged craft were developing under a new influence.

For these artists were living so close to ships and the sea; too much in contact with fishermen, East India merchants, sailors and masters of vessels, shipwrights, sailmakers, riggers and others to permit any inaccuracy. Often enough they came

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of seafaring stock, or went out sailing to gather their knowledge at first hand. Backhuysen, for instance, had been born at the port of Emden, and in spite of being intended for a business career at Amsterdam became so fond of shipping that his whole heart and soul were expended in making drawings of those handsome vessels which Amsterdam attracted. So keen did he become that it was like some obsession, which is comprehensible only by those who have in them the germs of sea-fever. Now such were his enthusiasm, such his ability, that these drawings realised high prices among ship lovers, and he was able to undertake painting. The call of the sea, but in a special sense, was within him; and he used to hire the Dutch fishermen to take him out in all weathers that he might study the waves and the ways of a ship under sail. The result is that Backhuysen's pictures are the real thing, authoritative, of higher reputation than any Van de Velde, especially in regard to storm scenes. And in the latter part of his life Backhuysen employed his time etching some of his own shipping views. Vitringa is another example of a man who could not resist the call of the sea. Born at Leewarden, and a lawyer by profession, he worked at Alkmar on those excellent marine paintings of the school of William van de Velde, and his well-drawn ships show how closely his mind was in sympathy with seafaring.

So, also, in England we had such a marine painter of our own nationality in Isaac Sailmaker, whose

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very surname suggests his ancestry. Born in England during the year 1633, he was appointed by Cromwell to paint a view of the fleet before Mardyke. His engravings are both rare and fetch high prices to-day. In the following century a Dutch engraver, Hendrik Hulsbergh, who came to London and was employed by the booksellers, did a number of engravings after Isaac Sailmaker, though these prints are not of the highest order. Nor must we omit mention of Peter Monamy (1670–1749), who came from Jersey to London, was apprenticed there to a house painter, but was destined afterwards to become a marine artist. Some of his pictures are to be found in our oldest yacht clubs, in Kensington Palace, in the Dulwich Gallery, and elsewhere.

Isaac Sailmaker was a master of detail, a faithful observer and true artist: the first distinguished English painter to set about producing those works which commemorate our great naval achievements. None of his oil paintings is known to exist. But engravings after his pictures by such men as Van der Gucht are rare and fetch high prices. Without a doubt those years of the Anglo-Dutch wars created a new and personal interest in seafaring, and, consequently, for illustrations of these momentous national events. It was a time, you will appreciate, when the brilliant daring and brave enterprise of the sixteenth century were not easy to emulate. The inspiration was not quite the same; there was not the same unity, and there

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was a sense of uneasiness caused by religious and political unsettlement.

In regard to naval affairs strictly, these seventeenth-century administrators and shipbuilders were exploring fresh avenues. The former were being called upon to undertake greater responsibilities: the latter to produce ships of unprecedented size and complicated rigging and immense sail area, whilst still the required data were inadequate. Pepysian literature shows this clearly enough. Anthony Deane, the illustrious shipbuilder who was for a time in residence at Portsmouth, had more duties than merely ensuring that the vessels were safely launched after construction; and this long before he became Comptroller of the victualling and suggested decreasing to one gallon a day the amount of beer allowed to each seaman. For it was thought that as no seamen seemed to drink as much as was provided, they would like to have some consideration in lieu thereof; and it would "be attended with extraordinary benefits to his Majesty, and more especially that of enabling his ships to carry their full proportion of victuals and to stay abroad in execution of his service accordingly." [1]

In regarding these seventeenth-century naval prints we have to consider the whole circumstances of English social life, the conditions under which the Navy was administered and the officers and men

[1] *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Naval Manuscripts in the Pepysian Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge*, vol. iv.

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lived afloat. Even the Petts, that most distinguished family of shipbuilders who ever worked for our Navy, had their hours of unhappiness. Mr. Christopher Pett, who was master-shipwright of Chatham, got into trouble for what we may regard as nothing worse than excess of zeal, namely, "extraordinary lavishness of expense" "in the carving and gilding of a boat fore and aft for his Royal Highness's new yacht the *Mary*" during the year 1677. And His Royal Highness expressed "not only his great dislike of the said shipwright's proceedings in the particular case, but his apprehension of the chargeable consequencies of permitting shipwrights to exercise that liberty which they are found daily to usurp of adorning their ships with carving, painting and gilding, without any limitation but at their own pleasure." But these master-shipwrights "when questioned touching their warrant upon which they ground their proceedings on any of these works of charge, do generally pretend his Majesty's verbal command."

This was the time when men were liable to be snatched up by press-gangs, and in turn to be rescued by the force and arms of seamen "walking up and down the town for that purpose," as Sir John Narbrough complained. In fact on one occasion about a hundred sailors "in a body did in a mutinous manner march with a black flag before them through the City of London as far as Guildhall, assaulting all prestmasters and rescuing of pressed men." This, too, was a period when to

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naval officers was " disquiet given them, and public dishonour occasioned to his Majesty's service from daily clamour of widows and orphans arising from the non-payment of his Majesty's bounty to them."

It is a credit to the seaman that while he has throughout the ages never been treated in sailing ships with an excess of consideration, yet he has still continued to go afloat and fight in those wars which were to build up the British Empire. In Pepysian times we know how the crews were fleeced, how the slop-seller would make a huge profit out of the difference between the value of the clothes and the price actually obtained. On the other hand, volunteers and " midshipmen extraordinary " were being borne aboard his Majesty's ships over and above the full complement. Modern phraseology would schedule this kind of practice as " graft. "For admittedly the volunteers were " too old and too long practised in the liberties and pleasures of the shore ever to apply themselves as they ought to do to the duty, obedience, and trade of a seaman." The " midshipmen extraordinary " had originally been a special rank " for such only as having been commanders and lieutenants in time of war cannot by the smallness of the action be provided for with the like employment in time of peace," but this idea had been abused and a set of men " wholly uncapable of doing the work " had been employed " to the insupportable inconveniency daily complained of by the commanders of the ships."

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The lot of the seaman and naval officer following a great war has always been a problem, and if we notice it in 1676, it was the same in the year 1919 and subsequently. Thus history, as it does again and again, repeats the same conditions under like circumstances. Pursers were no more popular in the seventeenth century than they are to-day; seamen were often kept unpaid of their wages, desertion was rife, ships' books were fraudulently kept, even petty officers were beaten and injured by irate commanding officers, captains were dismissed the service for bad behaviour after being taken back; but men who had lost their arms or legs in the service were appointed as cooks aboard the "great" ships, and given the assistance of another servant to do the work which missing limbs prevented. It was somewhat of an anomaly that men who had lost two and even four of their limbs should be sent afloat as cooks, and it was Mr. Pepys who represented to the King that "in consideration of the extraordinariness of the charity due to these poor wretches, and that the whole of the double-maimed men cannot . . . be estimated to exceed 40, his Majesty would be graciously pleased to take them into his charity," and this the King conceded, allowing them pensions.

So, as we look into these contemporary naval prints we must endeavour to transfer our minds back among the conditions of seafaring which then prevailed. We can, if we will, not merely step aboard those carved and gilt vessels, but go down

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below and learn from the very men their attitude, their grievances, their resentment at having been victims of the press-gang, but this could not be helped: even the workmen engaged in rebuilding St. Paul's Cathedral were not exempt from this compulsory impressment. On the other hand, we know as we examine a lively action of these times that English seamen fought pluckily, suffered the most terrible wounds; that those in command of these unhandy ships had no satisfactory charts, with the consequence that the North Sea shoals and strong tides were a source of perpetual danger, and caused men-of-war to get ashore. Still, it was a time when a school of seamanship, of naval tactics, was being gradually educated, which was to mean during the forthcoming wars against France and Spain that great protection which England needed if she was to fulfil her destiny and the British Empire was to have its attainment.

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IV

SOME EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MASTERS

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CHAPTER IV

SOME EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MASTERS

ENGRAVING had come to France much later than the time when it had arrived in the Low Countries, but its development during the reign of Louis XIV (1643–1715) was not surprising when we consider all that was done by that monarch for his country in regard to progress. It was his foreign policy that France should become pre-eminent in Europe, and to Colbert's great efforts Louis owed so much in the carrying out of the monarchial aims. French trade was encouraged, new companies were formed to do business in both East and West Indies, and the Levant. A French East India Company was created, French colonies in North America were to be extended, and for the protection of these companies and overseas possessions an efficient French fleet was so rapidly formed that by 1683 its numbers were two hundred and seventy-six sail. And whatever blunders and errors were perpetrated during this reign no one can deny that it is one of the most remarkable in all history.

The glory of the Flemish engravers had come to France, and there was the requisite financial con-

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dition, the prosperity of trade and shipping to give it encouragement. Large portraits were engraved, there was a demand for book illustration, and French naval architecture had reached a unique stage of progress. Presently all this influence was to have its effect on English life and activity, not excluding the making of sea prints. Before the middle of the eighteenth century, English engraving had reached a low ebb; and just as our shipbuilders and naval tacticians were to learn invaluable lessons from across the Channel, so it was with the making of prints. The eighteenth century saw the French engravers still supreme, but their work and the sojourn of certain of these artists in England did a great deal towards setting a higher standard here.

Admiral Sir George Rooke's spectacular success at Vigo in the year 1702 was just such another occasion as inspired the draughtsman, and I call the reader's attention to the interesting bird's-eye view which a contemporary line engraving gives of this incident. The title is *An Exact Draught of the Bay & Harbour of Vigo wherein is Exactly shown the burning, taking, and sinking of the French Fleet & Spanish Galleons that lay'd at Anckor before Redondella, as also the taking of two Castles, the landing and Incampment of the English and Dutch Forces under the command of his Grace the Duke of Ormond, S^r. George Rooke being Vice Admiral. The 12^th of October 1702. This Draught was taken by L. du Meé Ingenieur put out by the order of the States of Holland*; and at the bottom left-hand corner,

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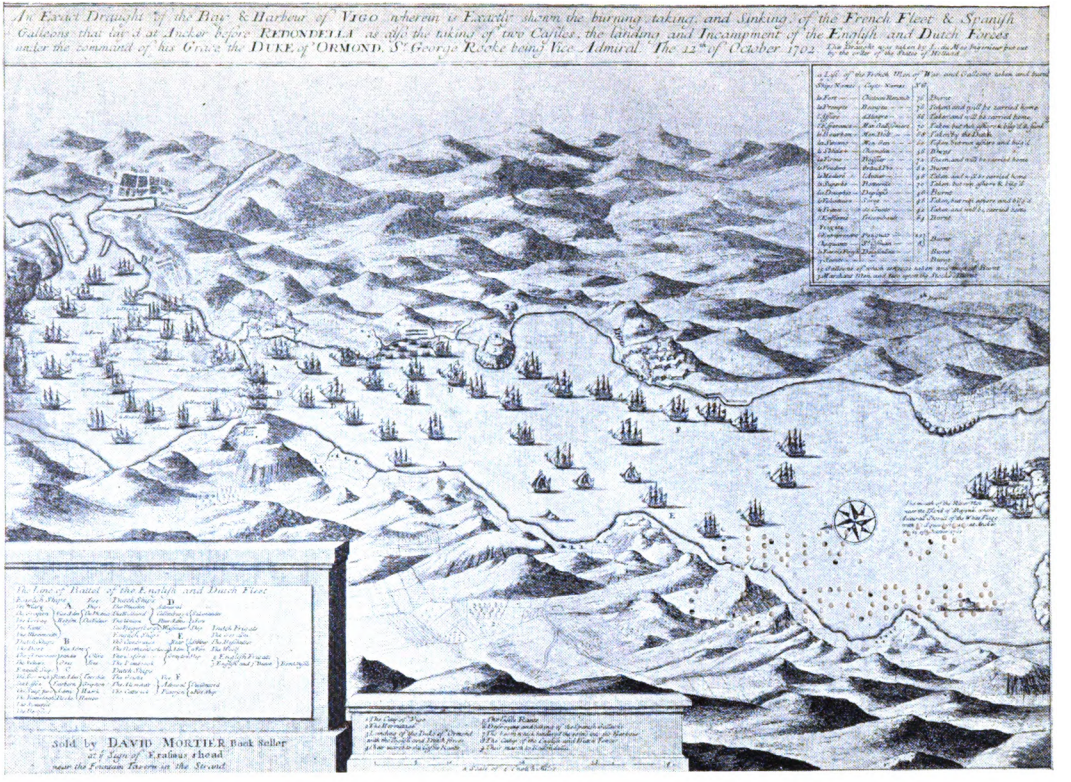
An Exact Draught of the Bay & Harbour of VIGO wherein is Exactly shewn the burning, taking, and Sinking of the French Fleet & Spanish Galleons that lay'd at Anchor before REDONDELLA as also the taking of two Castles, the landing and Incampment of the English and Dutch Forces under the command of his Grace the DUKE of ORMOND, Sr George Rooke being Vice Admiral. The 12th of October 1702
Sold by DAVID MORTIER Book Seller
at ye Sign of Erasmus's head
near the Freemans Tavern in the Strand

THE TAKING OF VIGO BY SIR GEORGE ROOKE.

(*From a contemporary print sold by David Mortier.*)

To face p. 72.

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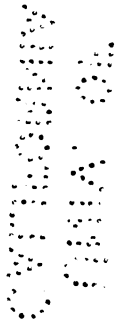

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" Sold by David Mortier Book Seller at y^e^ Sign of Erasmus's head near the Fountain Tavern in the Strand."

This engraving can be picked up for less than a five-pound note, but it does what it pretends: affords a clear and concise illustration of a dramatic and memorable naval occasion, in such a way that those at home were able to appreciate the exploits of their friends and relatives engaged under Rooke. Very briefly the incident depicted is as follows: War had been declared between England and France, so that from 1702 to 1713 there followed that period of hostilities which we speak of as the War of the Spanish Succession; Holland and Austria being allied with England. Rooke had been sent with fifty ships of the line, and transports carrying 14,000 troops on a thankless and unsuccessful task to Cadiz in order to " conciliate " the Spanish people and turn their minds against the Bourbon king.

But news now reached Rooke that in Vigo were lying under the veteran Château Renault a number of Spanish galleons, treasure ships from the rich West Indies. The British admiral therefore proceeded, entered Vigo and found fifteen rich galleons, but under the protection of eighteen ships-of-the-line and seven frigates. Furthermore, the entrance was dominated by forts and batteries, and at the inner end a formidable boom defence was stretched across the narrows, with the enemy ships inside. The problem for Rooke was thus no easy one, and it was decided that the boom must be broken by

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smaller craft first, and thus allow the bigger ships to enter. Shifting his flag accordingly to the *Somerset* (80 guns), whilst his second in command, Vice-Admiral Hopson, shifted to a similar vessel, the *Torbay*, these two gallant craft smashed the boom and the whole squadron came sailing into the inner harbour.

In the meanwhile Ormond with 2,500 men had landed to the southward (where it is marked by the figure 3), captured the fort (5) which commanded the entrance to the inner harbour, and thus removed the chief obstacle other than the boom. The whole operation is reminiscent of what might have happened at the Dardanelles during the Great War. For the soldiers having silenced the fort, Rooke's ships were able by their superior gunnery to overcome the sheltering vessels of the enemy, and presently we took or destroyed every sort of ship there floating inside the harbour, together with over £2,000,000 worth of specie, which was brought home to England.

Two years later, when Rooke with the assistance of the Dutch defeated the French at the Battle of Malaga, his portrait was painted in that conventional manner of wearing armour, and prints were eventually sold by L. Smith, of Russell-street, Covent Garden. During this eighteenth century there were published series of *Heads of Illustrious Persons* engraved by Jacob Houbraken, George Vertue and others. Those who are collectors of naval portraits will find that the earliest con-

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temporary examples are of Thomas Howard, and of Lord Howard of Effingham, both having been painted by Holbein; the former portrait being engraved by Scriven and the latter by Houbraken. For the portraits of Raleigh, Drake, Frobisher, Hawkins and other illustrious seafarers we are indebted to those Dutch artists who were engraving their plates in England or Holland during the seventeenth century. Subsequently the book illustrators, by English engravers copying contemporary pictures, commemorated the distinguished officers of the Anglo-Dutch wars.

But if we look for the best portrait engravings of eighteenth-century admirals we shall have to go to those which were done after the great geniuses, Reynolds, Romney, Gainsborough, and the like. Sir Joshua Reynolds was born not far from the sea, at Plympton, Devonshire, was taken afloat by Admiral Keppel, and ultimately painted a long list of admirals which includes Anson, Boscawen, Barrington, Hood and Rodney. Before the end of the seventeenth century the art of mezzotint had been discovered on the Continent by Ludwig von Siegen. Some of the exponents of this process then settled and worked in England, and so popular did this kind of engraving become that it soon was well known as "la manière anglaise." During the earlier part of the eighteenth century the best known mezzotint engraver was John Smith (circa 1652–1742); and in the latter part John Raphael Smith (1752–1812), among whose works may be

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quoted the mezzotint of John Jervis, Earl of St. Vincent, Nelson's great chief. And if, in considering many of these portraits where an admiral is often seen in the foreground with outstretched hand pointing to his fleet sailing away beyond the middle distance, or standing bareheaded in dramatic posture amid an unsailor-like medley of impossible sails and meaningless rigging and wrongly coiled ropes, with clouds of smoke conveniently filling in awkward spaces, let us not forget that this was an age of social and artistic insincerity, a period of great public anxiety and immense patriotic fervour. These portraits were of the men who delivered England at sea from perilous crises, and made possible the expansion of the British Empire. To-day we are too democratic to exert much enthusiasm over hero-worship; but the spirit of the eighteenth century demanded these dramatic and heroic portraits as a reaction from the dangers through which the country had just mercifully passed. Until the early nineteenth century our forefathers continued in a state of suspense: there was always a war or a rumour of war. And it is just because people at home realised how much depended on the sea service that they indulged the sailor with a kind of maternal embrace, regarded his boisterous shore exploits as good-natured jests, and his amorous delinquencies as condonable.

That famous national institution, Vauxhall Gardens, which opened in 1660, and for two centuries attracted fashionable London, used to exhibit

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important sea pictures in keeping with this patriotic feeling. After causing interest there, prints were in many cases made of them so that society might regard them in their own homes. Now at this time a desire was being born for printing in colour, and the earliest efforts were singularly crude if judged by modern standards. The first English experimental use of colour printing was probably by Elisha Kirkall, who was born at Sheffield in 1685, and died in Whitefriars, London, 1742. He worked in both mezzotint and chiaroscuro, and did a series of twelve prints, which included those subjects already alluded to and attempted by other artists—Captain Kempthorn's fight with the Algerine Pirates, the Battle of Solebay, and the Four Days' Fight of 1666.

There hung for a time in Vauxhall Gardens a painting by P. Monemie entitled *A Sea Engagement between the English and Algerines*. At that date there was living a French engraver named Pierre Fourdrinier, who flourished for about thirty years in London, engraving many plates for book illustration, architectural views and so on, finally dying in London during the year 1758. Now Fourdrinier was commissioned to engrave Monemie's painting, and it was published in 1743 by Thomas Bowles, who himself was an engraver and printseller. Born in London about the year 1712, he used to publish such subjects as views of London from the Thames, Somerset House, and so on; some of the prints being by himself and others by Fourdrinier.

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I have reproduced (facing p. 54) Fourdrinier's effort to copy Monemie's Vauxhall picture, but it is a crude affair in line engraving coloured. Neither the English nor the Algerine craft are anything but disappointingly done, and a plentiful use of smoke happily conceals the details of hull and rigging which the artist was too lazy to depict.

A more pleasing mezzotint after another of Monemie's pictures exhibited in Vauxhall Gardens, engraved also by Fourdrinier and published by Thomas Bowles and here reproduced, is *Sweet William's Farewel to Black Eyed Susan*, a print which can be picked up for about twenty shillings nowadays. One needs to be living again in those eighteenth-century days of sticky sentimentalism, when ships and crews went away for several years, when wrecks and disasters were anything but rare, when women were allowed on board to make tragic partings with sailor William or Jack—in order to appreciate the demand for such a picture at Vauxhall Gardens or the need for its reproduction, and admiration in stilted English homes. William's ship is just making sail and leaving the anchorage, and William's Susan, standing nobly in the stern sheets, is being rowed ashore with a last backward glance at the aforesaid sailor.

> The Boatswain gave the dreadful word,
> The sails their swelling bosom spread,
> No longer must she stay aboard:
> They kiss'd, she sigh'd, he hung his head:
> Her less'ning boat unwilling rows to land,
> Adieu, she cries, and wav'd her lily hand.

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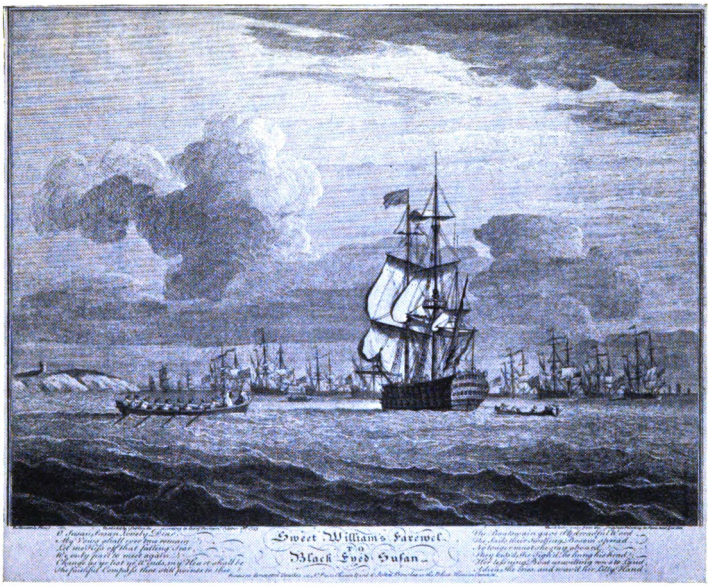

"WILLIAM'S FAREWEL TO BLACK EYED SUSAN."

(*From the mezzotint by Pierre Fourdrinier.*)

CAPTURE OF PORTO BELLO BY VICE-ADMIRAL VERNON.

(*From the contemporary engraving published by Thomas Bowles.*)

To face p. 78.

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Peter Monamay, as we have also called him, or Pierre Monemie, as his name is seen on these prints, painted the incident of Admiral Vernon's capture of Porto Bello. For the reason that will become presently apparent, this was just the kind of picture which would become popular. It was exhibited at Vauxhall Gardens, where Admiral George Byng, who became Viscount Torrington and also First Lord of the Admiralty, examined it and admired it for its accurate detail. Thomas Bowles published in 1743 a line engraving in colours of this picture, the engraver being R. Parr. But already in April 1740, Bowles had issued a print which is here reproduced and entitled *A Perspective View of y^e^ Harbour, Castles, & Town of Porto Bello: with y^e^ Disposition of y^e^ Ships under y^e^ Command of Vice Admiral Vernon, when he took the same on the 22^d^ of November* 1739 *with six Men of War only: shewing the manner of Cannonading of the Iron Castle, Scaling the Walls and other Incidents during that glorious Action.* Apart from the six ships under Vernon (whose flag was in *Burford*, marked F in the picture), it is interesting to note the two tenders marked L, lying at the bottom right-hand side. These two craft are fore-and-aft rigged, with large square topsail and gaff mainsail, being, as we know from other sources, identical with the royal yacht of the time.

Within five months of Porto Bello's capture, Bowles had put this print on the market, and the popular interest demanded it. It was in 1739

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that the war had begun again in earnest, and the passionate hatred between England and Spain was very much alive. At home public feeling rebelled against the restrictions of the Peace of Utrecht, one of whose terms was that England was forbidden to send more than one merchant ship yearly to trade with the Spanish colonies. This was overcome, but quite illegally, by sending out to this single vessel which remained out of sight of the shore a number of tenders who received the English goods and carried them as convenient to the local colonial ports. Presently in similar manner the ship was reloaded by the tenders with a homeward cargo. The English colonies were also attempting a contraband trade with those of Spain.

Obviously this was bound to bring trouble. The Spaniards had a coastguard service of ships off those islands, and began searching English vessels, with the result that they were resisted, and during one of these collisions an English sailor named Jenkins from a merchant ship had his ear cut off by a Spaniard. This appendage was preserved in cotton wool, brought back to England, and Jenkins, with a keen sense of melodramatic values, displayed the horrible sight to his fellow-countrymen. Popular indignation knew no bounds at this Spanish insult to England. Walpole was left no choice in the matter, and with Spain war there certainly must be.

The first objective was to strike where Spain

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would most sensitively feel the blow, and that spot was her colonies in the New World. Edward Vernon was at this time not employed afloat, but sitting in the House of Commons as member for Ipswich. Fiery, ill-tempered, bombastic, arrogant, ambitious, a "popularity Jack" as the Navy would call him to-day, Vernon knew how to get his theatrical effects, how to appeal to the gallery and obtain his wishes. The son of a former Secretary of State, his rapid promotion had come about rather through family influence than sheer merit. And yet, for all that, he was both clever and audacious.

Boasting that if he were allowed half a dozen ships, he would soon take Porto Bello, he was given this chance, and what is more had the good fortune to succeed in carrying out his boast. The result was that people at home were filled with delirious joy, and he was the hero of the hour; but seven years later he suffered very different conditions when he was dismissed the service. However, he has left his impress on naval history by having introduced into the Navy the practice of serving out rum mixed with water, which became known as "grog," for Admiral Vernon's nickname in the service was "Old Grog," from his habit of wearing a grogram coat.

The news of Vernon's success was celebrated in various ways: the thanks of Parliament were voted to him, roads and districts were named Portobello, his portrait was adopted as the most popular sign for ale-houses, and this print com-

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memorated what, after all, was not a very difficult enterprise. The Spanish garrison was already crippled with fever, the fortifications were in bad condition, and many of the guns not yet mounted. In other words Vernon arrived to find Porto Bello unprepared. A short musketry fire captured the fort protecting the harbour entrance, a rapid cannonade drove the garrison from the castle protecting the town, and the Governor surrendered. Thus, within forty-eight hours, and with the loss of only seven men, Vernon had been able to carry out his boast.

Unfortunately this mid-eighteenth century was a period when canker seemed to have eaten into English life, when ideals had become lowered and baseness was normal. As we know from contemporary writers, this was the time when the village parson was often drunk on the brandy obtained from the smugglers; when art became insincere and an artist painted all grass brown; when there was little religion and morality seemed hypocritical; when politics were utterly corrupt and fierce partisanship knew no bounds to its vindictiveness. Pride, injustice, self-assertiveness, revenge: these faults were not confined to the land but were ruining the service afloat. The line engraving by W. H. Toms, which is here reproduced, gives a clear idea of an incident that might have been one of the most glorious of English victories but for the personal jealousy, animosity and ugly feeling between two of our own admirals. Toms was a London engraver

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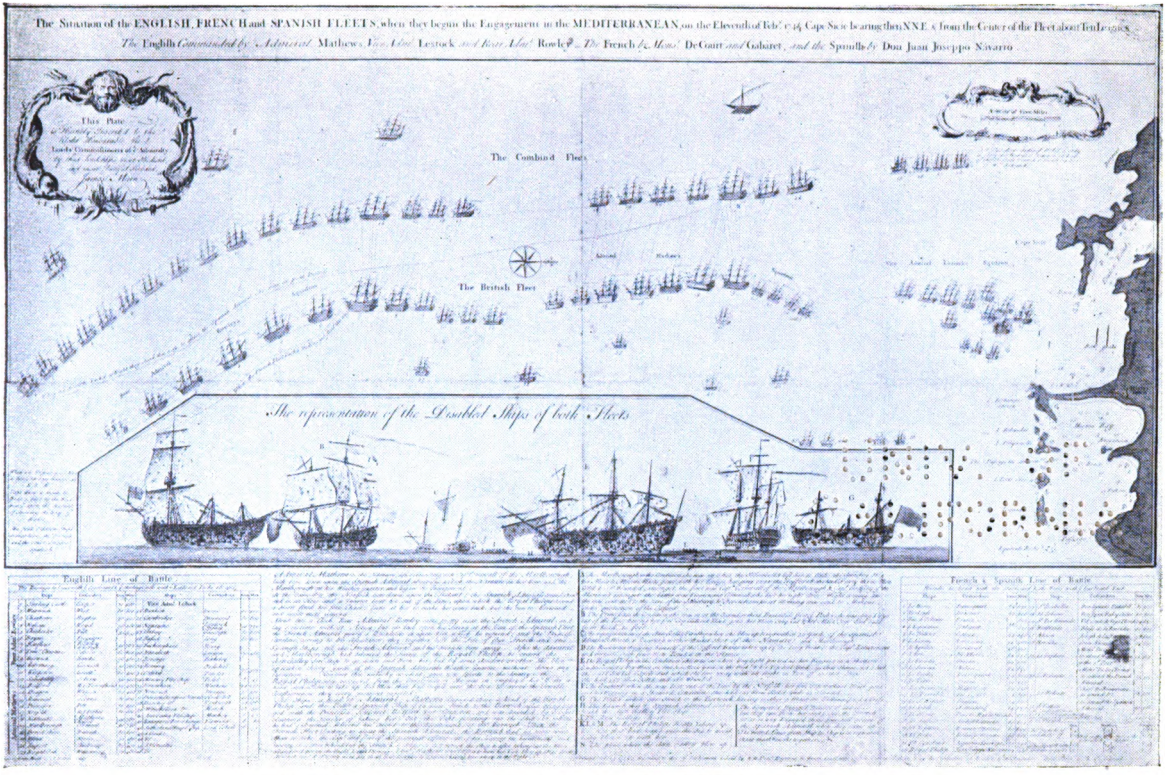
The Situation of the ENGLISH, FRENCH and SPANISH FLEETS, when they begun the Engagement in the MEDITERRANEAN, on the Eleventh of Feb.y 1744 Cape Sicie bearing then NNE. 6 from the Center of the Fleet about Ten Leagues
The English Commanded by Admiral Mathews, Vice Admi. Lestock and Rear Admi. Rowley. The French by Mons.r De Court and Gabaret, and the Spanish by Don Juan Josepho Navarro
This Plate
The Combined Fleet
The British Fleet
The representation of the Disabled Ships of both Fleets
English Line of Battle
French & Spanish Line of Battle

THE ENGAGEMENT OFF TOULON, FEBRUARY 22, 1744.

(*From the contemporary line engraving by W. H. Toms.*)

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and printseller "in Union Court near Hatton Garden, Holborn," whose work consisted principally of plates for booksellers, portraits, architectural subjects; but he also did several views of Gibraltar and about a dozen views of shipping.

In this representation of the engagement off Toulon Toms, who published this print a year after the incident, had a ready public both for the plain and the coloured impressions. For the incident caused such protracted interest, so many courts martial and so much political interference, that everyone wished to know exactly what did happen off Toulon, and just how the fleets were disposed. So you will see that Toms has given us a mixture of chart work, plan and picture. Toulon Roads and the French coast are seen at the right, then immediately to the southward is Vice-Admiral Lestock's squadron, next Admiral Mathews' squadron, whilst to the west is the combined Franco-Spanish fleet. The situation here shown is February 22, 1744, when the engagement began. Briefly the circumstances were as follows:

The English fleet, consisting of twenty-eight line-of-battle ships (in addition to fireships, victuallers, hospital ship and others), was operating in the Mediterranean off Toulon, inside which was lying the Franco-Spanish fleet under command of Admiral de Court. On February 19th this allied force put to sea, consisting of twenty-seven ships, plus a few smaller craft. The two fleets were approximately of equal strength. It was on February 22nd

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that Admiral Mathews' fleet met the allies, and obtained the weather-gauge, the wind at first being "a fine topsail breeze at E.S.E.," both fleets standing to the southward. In the rear of the English line will be noted Lestock's squadron. Now, owing to personal hatred, and to a certain act of incivility which had occurred between these two admirals the previous evening, Lestock failed to join up with his Commander-in-Chief, and deliberately disobeyed the latter's signals. Mathews was in the *Namur*, and when abreast of the enemy's centre, made the signal to engage, bore down out of line and attacked the largest enemy vessel, *El Real Felipe*, the 110-gun Spanish flagship, his own *Namur* being of only 90 guns. The engagement became fierce, *Namur* was so heavily damaged that Mathews had to shift his flag to *Russel*, but *El Real Felipe* was crippled and had to be towed out of action. She is shown in this condition marked (E) in the sketch at the bottom of the plate. The battle had begun at 1 p.m., and Mathews was nobly assisted by Rear-Admiral Rowley's squadron, which is here shown At the approach of evening Mathews formed a fresh line-of-battle so as to allow Lestock time to join up, but the latter deliberately held back: the brunt of the action had been confined to a comparatively small number of ships, and there had been neither tactical skill nor the full employment of numbers. Even when on the following morning the allied fleet were sailing off to the south-west in great disorder, with many of its

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units damaged badly, when *El Felipe* was in tow, and Mathews made a signal for the English fleet to chase, Lestock still held back, and the early oncoming night at the end of a short wintry day ended the pursuit. Next day, however, the chase was resumed, and by this time Lestock had joined up and was even eager to fight: but Mathews had reasons for not getting too near Gibraltar Straits, and the chase was abandoned.

Mathews naturally accused Lestock of having prevented a victory, and formal proceedings were presently begun in England. But it happened that Mathews sat as a member of Parliament with the Opposition: the Admiralty were therefore biassed against him, and the whole inquiry became a party question, with the issue determined beforehand. Courts martial were interfered with by the House of Commons, and various officers were involved. About a couple of years after the battle Lestock's trial came on, and to us it seems amazing and incredible that in spite of the fact that it was clearly established that Mathews had ordered him to make sail and Lestock had disobeyed, the latter was unanimously acquitted and subsequently given another command. Such, indeed, was the political turpitude of the time, such the shameful animosity of those in high places, that Mathews, by an act of gross injustice, was tried by courts martial, cashiered, and doomed not to be employed in the service again.

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V

WOODEN SHIPS AND STEEL ENGRAVERS

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CHAPTER

WOODEN SHIPS AND STEEL ENGRAVERS

We come now to that interesting personality John Boydell, who was born in Shropshire during the year 1719, became Lord Mayor of London in 1791, and died amid a halo of respect in 1804. Boydell did a great deal for English engraving both as a worker himself and as a printseller. It was not until he was over twenty years old that he learnt his art and came up to London. At this time English engraving, as we have seen, was in a low grade, so that collectors who desired techically pleasing and imaginatively beautiful prints used to get them from abroad, especially from France.

But Boydell revolutionised this condition, uplifted British engraving to such a standard that our prints were in demand all over civilised Europe. By the seventeen-fifties he had already built up a large continental print trade, and besides quite a number of shipping subjects he issued a series of Shakespearean prints after originals specially painted by English artists. It was the French Revolution which brought a sudden ending to his prosperous

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trade abroad, so that he applied to Parliament for permission to sell his pictures by lottery. Actually he was responsible for the issue of nearly four and a half thousand plates in forty-eight volumes. Three of these prints are reproduced for the twentieth-century collector to compare.

The first of these is a line engraving, which can be picked up for three or four pounds, and shows the capture of the 900-ton Spanish ship *Nuestra Senora de los Remedios* (alias *La Ninfa*) off Cape St. Mary's on February 5, 1746, by the "Royal Family" class of privateers, *Prince Frederick*, *Prince George* and *Duke*. By Captain James Talbot this foreigner with thirty-two guns, over three hundred men, and with a very rich cargo was taken, but in November of that same year she was wrecked off Beachy Head. Of the picture before us the original was painted by that marine artist Charles Brooking, who was just four years older than Boydell, who engraved it. Brooking died at thirty-six, and is said to have been employed at Deptford Dockyard, where he would have every opportunity of studying shipping in all conditions of refit. His paintings of naval manoeuvres and sea fights are well known, Canot being another engraver who used to reproduce his works.

Privateering was an adventurous roving commission financed by merchants not as a piratical expedition but as a business affair which promised financial reward to all, and also to the crews the thrill of exciting incident. When, for instance,

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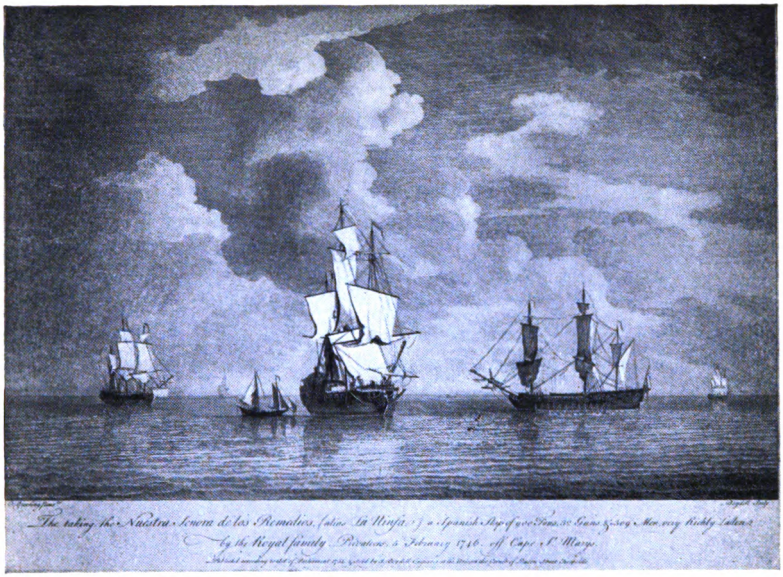
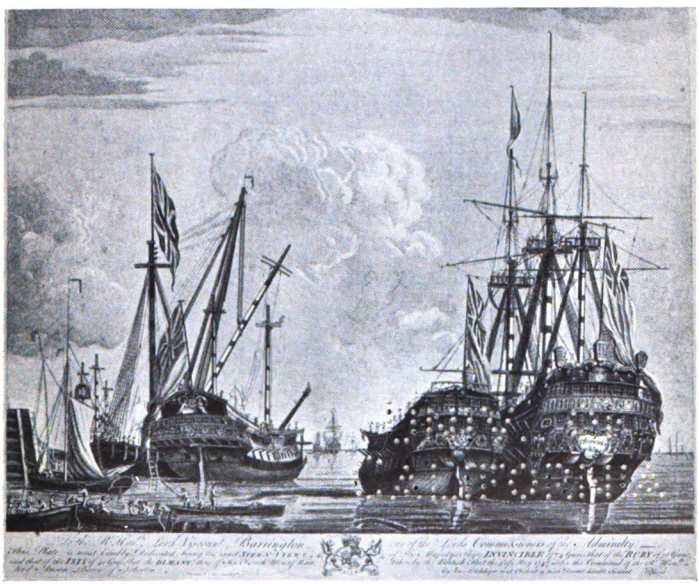


CAPTURE OF A SPANISH SHIP BY PRIVATEERS.

(*Engraved by John Boydell.*)



INVINCIBLE, RUBY AND *ISIS.*

(*From the engraving published by John Boydell.*)

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we were in the eighteenth century at war with France, Spain, Holland and even the American colonies, the Admiralty was authorised to grant "Letters of Marque and General Reprizals" to British subjects and others "for apprehending, seizing and taking the Ships, Vessels and Goods" of such enemies. It was because of the dangers to ships and trade by these privateers that the convoy system (revived with so much success when the submarine menace was so serious in the year 1917) was relied on, as many as 250 sail escorted by a dozen ships of the line and frigates being no exceptional occurrence.

Early in the year 1747 it was known in England that the French were fitting out an expedition at Brest, of which part was to sail to Nova Scotian and Newfoundland coasts, and part to make for the East Indies. In order to thwart this plan, Anson and Warren were sent, who on the third day of May encountered the French off Finisterre, capturing six men-of-war and four of the East Indiamen as well as the two French admirals.

In the accompanying illustration is a print published by Boydell showing "the exact Stern-Views of His Majesty's Ships *Invincible* of 74 Guns, that of the *Ruby* of 50 Guns, and that of the *Isis* of 40 Guns (late the *Dimant*), three of Six French Men-of-War, taken by the British Fleet, the 3^{d} of May, 1747, under the Command of the R^{t}. Hon^{ble}. Lord Anson, Baron of Soberton." This spring victory caused a great popular effect in

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England. Over £3,000,000 in specie was found on board the prizes, Anson was publicly thanked by the King, and he was made a peer. In Boydell's print we see them in dockyard hands being remasted and refitted.

Some idea of a 74-gun French man-of-war when seen quite near under sail is afforded by Boydell's spirited line engraving of H.M.S. *Monarque*, which was one of the six Frenchmen captured on October 14th, in that same year, 1747, by Admiral Hawke. This impression, which can be picked up for ten or fifteen pounds, is well worthy of study by any lover of ships. Such details as the lead of the sheets, the stuns'l booms, the stowing of the anchors, the mast-hoops of the ensign, the fore-bowlines, and so on are all so clearly indicated that the picture is nearly as instructive as a model. The fourteenth of October was the day when Hawke with fourteen ships of the line appeared off Brest and encountered a force of nearly three hundred ships, of which nearly all were armed merchantmen. The battle began before noon and by five o'clock *Monarque*, *Fougueux* and others had struck to Hawke. The French escort had been beaten, although of bigger gun power: but Hawke's vessels had been badly battered and the merchantmen had escaped.

One of the most romantic of successful lives was that of Richard Paton, who was born in London during the year 1717. He was found as a poor lad running about the streets by Admiral Knowles,

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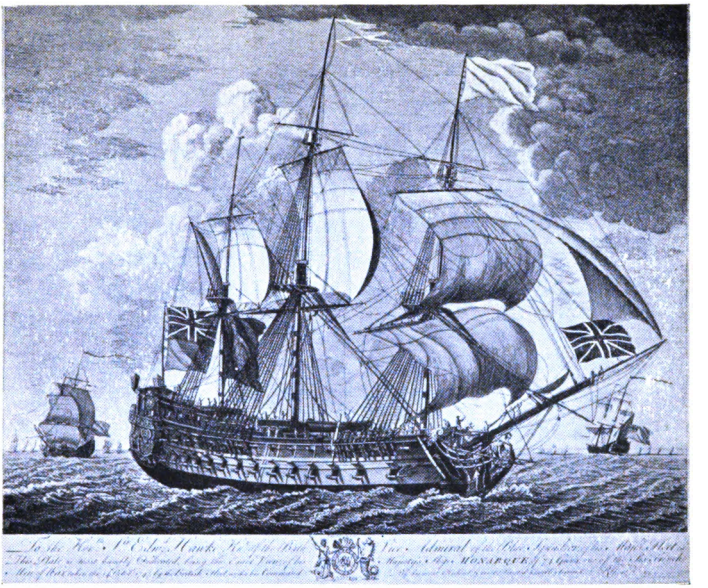
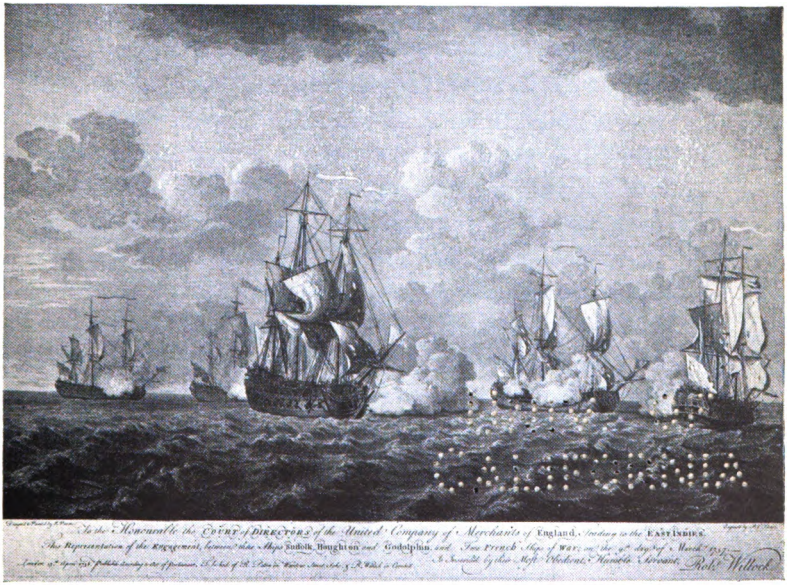


H.M.S. *MONARQUE.*
(*Engraved by John Boydell.*)



SUFFOLK, HOUGHTON AND *GODOLPHIN* WITH THE ENEMY.
(*Engraved by P. C. Canot.*)

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who sent him to sea. Paton thus from his early years got first-hand knowledge of ships, became a marine artist and exhibited at the Royal Academy, dying in London nine years before the end of the century. Living in an age of seafaring, and possessing excellent technical knowledge of masts, sails, rigging and the behaviour of vessels, his pictures, which embraced most of the contemporary great sea-battles, were highly esteemed. Of these many were reproduced by Pierre Charles Canot, William Woollett, and James Fittler. The great merit of Paton's paintings is that from the seaman's point of view they are correct, faithful and satisfying.

I have included here a line engraving by P. C. Canot after one of Paton's paintings. This represents the engagement on March 9, 1757, when three ships *Suffolk*, *Houghton*, and *Godolphin* of that close and historic corporation the Honourable East India Company encountered near the Cape of Good Hope two French ships, a 74- and a 26-gun frigate. In the print two of the East Indiamen are seen to the left, with the heavy "74" in the foreground, the third merchantman on its port bow, and the frigate at the extreme right. In the East Indiamen will be seen flying the pennants and national ensign. A brisk action ensued, but finally the French men-of-war were compelled to retire. It must be recollected that though these East Indiamen were well manned and well armed, well built and with first-rate officers, yet by reason of her cargo and passengers such a craft was

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always at a disadvantage when meeting with a genuine man-of-war. But some of the best fights in the history of the sea were those occasions when these gallant traders fought French privateers or regular war vessels. The classical instance is that when in the year 1804 a fleet of East Indiamen under Commodore Nathaniel Dance, carrying many thousand pounds' worth of China goods for England, met and defeated a French squadron under Admiral Linois consisting of one 74-, one 40-, one 36-, one 22-, and one 16-gun ship.

Canot was a French engraver who was born about 1710, this particular print being published in April 1758, just thirteen months after the fight. Canot had come to England in 1740 and was elected thirty years later an Associate-Engraver of the Royal Academy, dying seven years afterwards in Kentish Town. In his work we have the delicate French art combined with the English vigour. It is true that Paton made a few etchings himself, such as the engagement between the *Monmouth* and *Foudroyant*, 1758: but some of the best prints which Canot ever engraved were after Paton. Besides these Canot engraved many other sea-pieces such as those after Backhuysen, Van de Velde and other marine artists: but also he did a number of meritorious landscapes.

The life of William Woollett, just mentioned, was another of those curious eighteenth-century romances. Born at Maidstone in 1735, his father was of Dutch ancestry and a flax dresser by trade.

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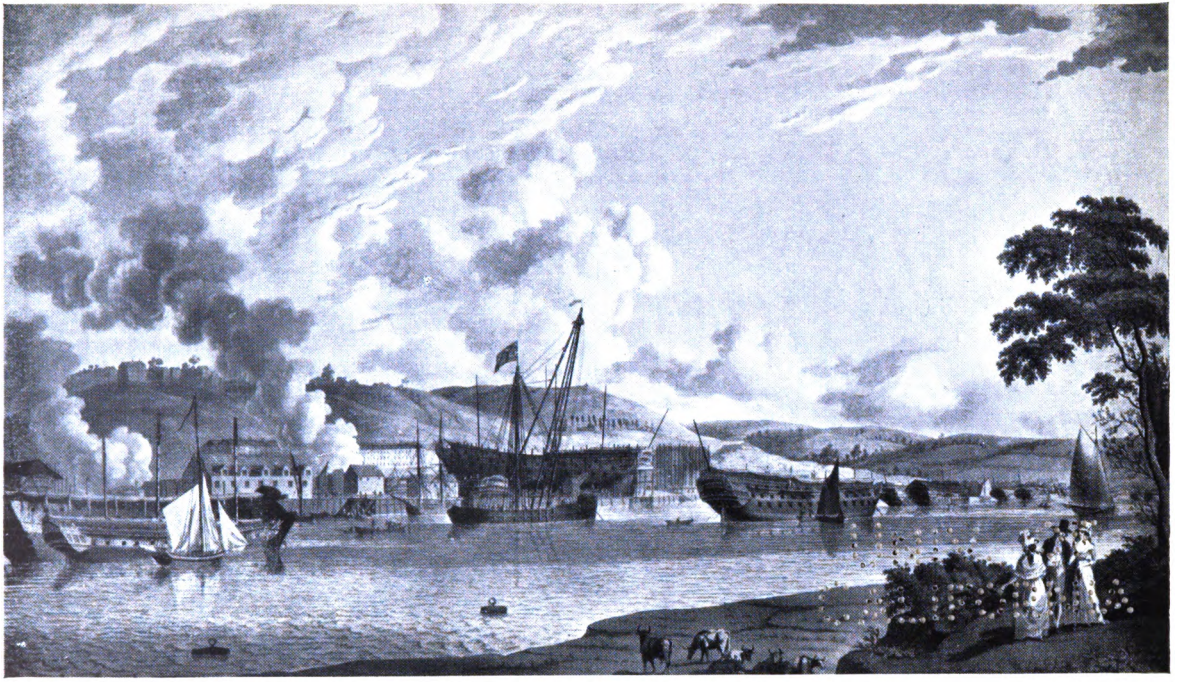

THE ROYAL DOCKYARD AT CHATHAM.

(*Aquatint engraved by Robert Dodd.*)

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But through the luck of a lottery ticket he won a prize of £5,000 and thus was able to take a public-house called "The Turk's Head." It was on one of the pewter pots of this tavern that young William Woollett showed his inclination by scratching the head of a Turk. Eventually he was sent to London as apprentice to an engraver, and he established himself as the best landscape engraver in England: indeed he raised landscape engraving to a condition then unknown and still unsurpassed. He still further increased his fame by his engraving of the death of General Wolfe, and was appointed historical engraver to George III, dying in 1785. Among his more important naval prints is that of *The Battle of La Hogue.*

Another instance of the influence of French art at this period may be traced to Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, who was born at Strassbourg in 1740, but settled in Paris, where he became a popular painter of battles and sea-pieces, being afterwards made Court Painter to the French King. But in 1771 de Loutherbourg left France and settled for good in England. That was an age of militarism, when admirals and generals were supreme in popular estimation, and battles scenes were the highest form of art. De Loutherbourg had learned painting from the battle painter Casanova, and now when he came to London he was employed by Garrick at £500 a year to design scenes for Drury Lane. He lived to paint most of the important naval events of his period, such as Lord Howe's victory of the

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Glorious First of June, and he also made some etchings. His art, with its love of wreckage, floating spars, drowning seamen, and theatrical seeking after dramatic effect, is somewhat conventional. Still, he was a skilled draughtsman who became a Royal Academician, and his regard for the details of naval uniform is most accurate and valuable. The best line engravings of James Fittler (just mentioned) are *The Battle of the Nile*, and *Lord Howe's Glorious First of June*, both after de Loutherbourg. Fittler's life is covered by the dates 1758–1835. Nor must we omit to mention the sea paintings and etchings of Thomas Baston, who flourished in this eighteenth century and has left us some splendidly detailed pictures of contemporary ships.

Robert Dodd, who flourished during the latter part of that century, was another marine painter who possessed the sure artistic knowledge of a ship under sail. His pictures cover such subjects as storms at sea, naval engagements, Rodney's victory of 1785, and so on. Reproduced here will be seen *The Royal Dockyard at Chatham*, which was both drawn and engraved by Dodd. This aquatint was published in 1789 by Boydell and bears the following note: "We can trace this Royal Yard as far back as Queen Elizabeth's Reign, but since that time it has undergone great Alterations, and improvements, so as to become the finest Building Yard in the Kingdom. And when this View was taken, there was on the

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Stocks the *Liviathan* of 74 Guns, finished, the *Ville de Paris* upwards of 100 Guns Building, the *Royal Charlotte* nearly finished, one of the largest Ships in the World, being upwards of 2278 Tons Burden, and on the same construction and dimensions with the *Royal George* lately launched there, and now lying in the River Medway, and three Ships of the Line in Dock repairing."

Aquatint is engraving on copper with nitric acid, and the tone thus obtained is the nearest approach which engraving can make towards the quality of the water-colour wash. The method which had been invented by Jean Baptist Le Prince (1734–1784), had been in use only twenty years when Dodd produced this plate. Copies are easily obtainable at six or seven pounds. But in the next picture we have a line engraving by John Peltro, after one of Robert Dodd's paintings. Peltro was born in 1760 and died at Hendon in 1808, and spent most of his time engraving such subjects as the views of big country houses for wealthy landowners. In the engraving before us, however, we have a lively incident which occurred off the Yorkshire coast in the year 1779, and is concerned with one of the most interesting characters of eighteenth-century seafaring, John Paul Jones, a man of international fame and notoriety.

This Scottish pirate and privateer was born in Kirkcudbrightshire in 1747 and died in Paris during the year 1792. For many years the place of his burial was not found, but twenty years ago after

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a six-year search, his remains were discovered in the St. Louis cemetery, Paris, and conveyed across the Atlantic to the United States, a squadron having been specially sent over for the purpose. Paul Jones was another of those ambitious Scots who rose from the rating of a seaman to become captain of his own ship. Wild, reckless, brave, vain, a rebel, a smuggler as well as pirate and privateer, quarrelsome, sometimes even petty and mean, the outstanding characteristic is his love of adventure.

After having made some voyages to the West Indies, and being promoted first to mate and then master, it happened that soon after the break between England and America, Jones was in New England, deserted from his own national standard, changed his name from John Paul to Paul Jones and allied himself to the revolutionists, and a most valuable acquisition so fine a sailor and fighter was to prove. In 1777 he fitted out the privateer *Ranger*, put to sea, made two captures on the European side of the Atlantic and sent them both into a French port. In the following spring he appeared off the coast of Cumberland, swooped down on Whitehaven, then entered that scene of his boyhood, Solway Firth, anchored off Lord Selkirk's castle, sent ashore an armed party, and took off every bit of the family plate down to a silver teapot, though it is only fair to add that five years later Jones returned it all to the castle in the best condition.

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After leaving Solway Firth he sailed over to the Irish coast, fought a fierce encounter with H.M.S. *Drake*, a sloop, killing the latter's captain and first lieutenant, and even causing the *Drake* to surrender, which he took into Brest. But in the following year Jones had command of a frigate named the *Bon Homme Richard*, which carried 40 guns and 370 men. In addition to her he had the 36-gun frigate *Alliance*, the 14-gun brig *Vengeance*, an 18-gun cutter, and a French frigate *Pallas*. With the exception of the last-mentioned all were in the service of the American Congress. After a visit to the coast of Kerry, Jones sailed across to the east side of Scotland, and towards the end of September, off the Yorkshire coast, fell in with a British convoy homeward bound from the Baltic escorted by the two men-of-war, H.M.S. *Serapis* of 44 guns, and H.M.S. *Countess of Scarborough* of 20 guns. The senior officer present was Captain R. Pearson, R.N., Captain Thomas Piercy being in the *Countess of Scarborough*.

On September 23rd, as Captain Pearson afterwards wrote, "being close in with Scarborough about twelve o'clock, a boat came on board with a letter from the bailiffs of that corporation, giving information of a flying squadron of the enemy's ship being on the coast, of a part of the said squadron having been seen from thence the day before standing to the southward." Shortly afterwards Jones's four ships were sighted, and Pearson "at six tacked and laid our head in-shore, in order to keep our ground

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the better between the enemy's ships and the convoy; soon after which we perceived the ships bearing down upon us to be a two-decked ship and two frigates." After Pearson had hailed the *Bon Homme Richard* and received an evasive reply, shots were exchanged, two or three broadsides followed, and then Jones "put his helm a-weather, and laid us athwart hawse; his mizen shrouds took our jib-boom, which hung for some time, till it at last gave way, and we dropt alongside each other head and stern, when the fluke of our spare anchor hooking his quarter, we became so close for-and-aft, that the muzzles of our guns touched each other's sides."

This went on from 8.30 p.m. for two whole hours, so that Pearson's ship was on fire a dozen times in different parts of the vessel. "At the same time the largest of the two frigates kept sailing round us during the whole action, and raking us fore and aft, by which means she killed or wounded almost every man on the quarter and main decks." At 9.30 p.m. all the men abaft the mainmast were blown up and all the guns in that part rendered useless. "At ten o'clock they called for quarters from the ship alongside, and said they had struck. . . . I called for the boarders, and ordered them to board, which they did; but the moment they were on board her, they discovered a superior number lying under cover, with pikes in their hands, ready to receive them; on which our people retreated instantly into our own ship, and returned

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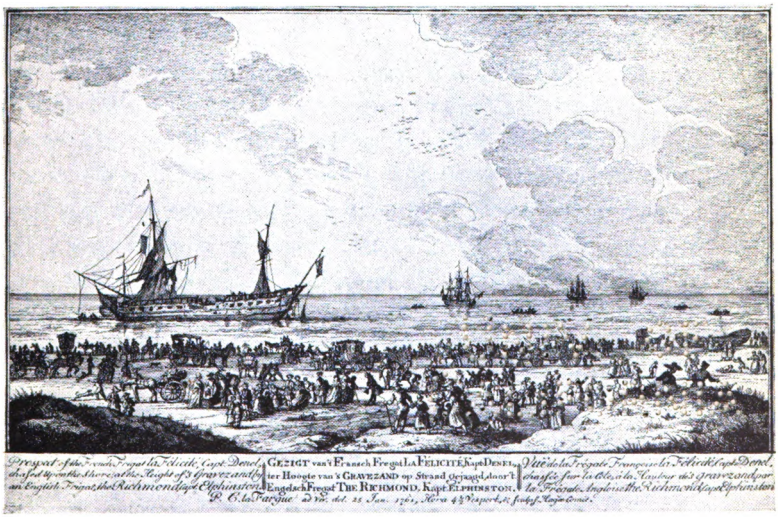
H.M.S. *SERAPIS* ALONGSIDE THE *BON HOMME RICHARD.*
(*Engraved by John Peltro.*)


Gezigt van't Franach Fregat LA FELICITE Kapt DENEL
ter Hoogte van 's GRAVEZAND op Strand gejaagd, Anno 1761
Engelsch Fregat THE RICHMOND, Kapt ELPHINSTON
P. C. la Fargue ad vivum del. 25 Jan. 1761, Hora 4 Vesperi, & sculpsit Hagæ Comit.

THE *RICHMOND* DRIVES *LA FÉLICITÉ* ASHORE.
(*Etched by P. C. la Fargue.*)

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to their guns again until half-past ten, when the frigate coming across our stern, and pouring her broadside into us again, without our being able to bring a gun to bear on her, I found it in vain. . . . I therefore struck. Our main-mast at the same time went by the board. The first lieutenant and myself were immediately escorted into the ship alongside, when we found her to be an American ship of war, called the *Bon Homme Richard*, of forty guns, and 375 men commanded by Captain Paul Jones. . . . She had 300 men killed and wounded."

That one of His Majesty's ships should have struck to Paul Jones was distinctly something of which the latter could be proud. But Captain Pearson had succeeded in upsetting the enemy's cruise, and had enabled the whole of the valuable convoy to escape from the enemy. This was duly appreciated, Captain Pearson being afterwards knighted by the King, and the Directors of the Royal Exchange Assurance Company presented him with a piece of plate valued at a hundred guineas. Peltro's engraving is dedicated *To the Merchants Trading to Russia*, and in the foreground we see the much damaged *Serapis* lying alongside the *Bon Homme Richard*. In the distance are seen the castle and hill of Scarborough which a German squadron were to shell a hundred and thirty-six years later. Through those very waters where the Russian convoy sailed, safely escaping, Scandinavian steamship convoys during the latter part of the Great War were to pass regularly in spite

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of mines, submarines and raiders. So closely is geography woven in the tapestry of history.

In contrast with these British engravers let us refer to the work of foreign artists of this eighteenth century. Bastian Stoopendaal, who was flourishing during the earlier part of this period, was making plates of shipping after the style of Cornelius Visscher. But I have reproduced here a charming Dutch etching by Paul Constantin la Fargue, a Dutch painter who lived at the Hague for a long time, and died at Leyden in 1782. Most of his pictures are quite small, being usually views of the Hague and not as meritorious as his drawings. He left behind only a very few etchings, and this one under discussion is valuable for the reason that la Fargue came down to the coast and made the sketch on the spot at 4.30 p.m., January 25, 1761. The incident shown is one that caused great local consternation, and everyone, rich or poor, young or old, came running down to the sands to see the strange sight of a dismasted much damaged French frigate driven towards the shore. The whole beach was agog with coaches and waggons, shouting children, men and women. For Captain John Elphinstone in the British frigate *Richmond* had beaten and chased ashore the French frigate *La Félicité*. This etching is worth less than ten pounds, but apart from its artistic charm we value it for its truth and sincerity. We know that the ships and people looked just like that on a certain winter's afternoon.

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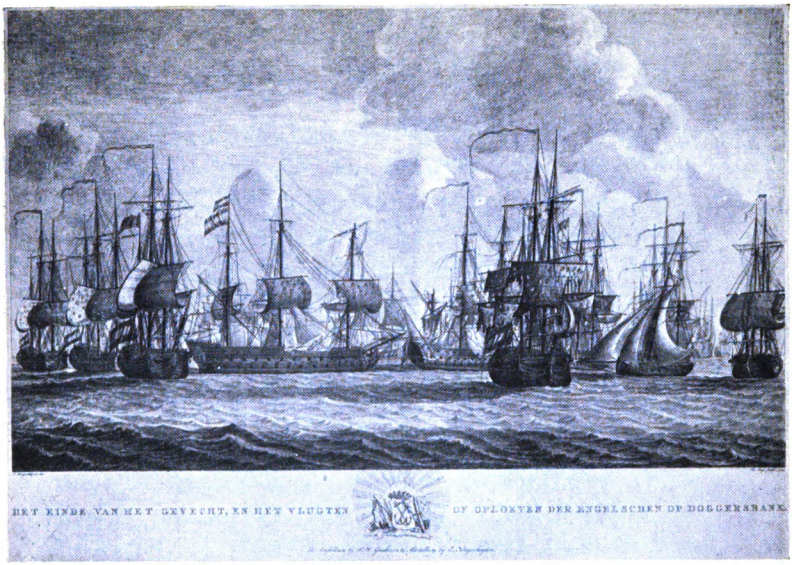
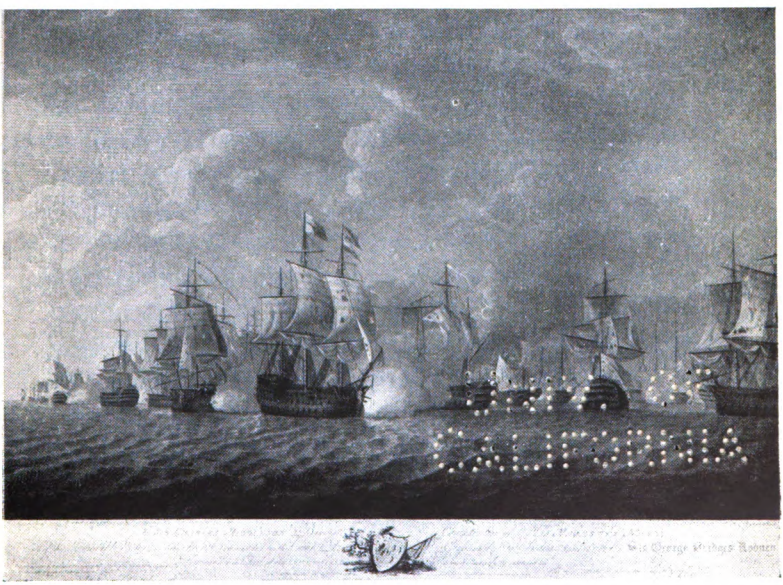


ADMIRAL HYDE PARKER'S ENGAGEMENT OFF THE DOGGER BANK.

(*Engraved by R. Muys.*)



BATTLE OF THE SAINTS. (See p. 106.)

(*Engraved by Francis Chesham.*)

To face p. 102.

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Much harder and more formal is the engraving of the engagement off the Dogger Bank by that Dutchman, R. Muys, an artist who was responsible also for a number of portrait engravings. This plate was made three years after the incident took place, the original having been done by E. Hoogerheyden of Middelburg. This print gives us interesting details of an armed fore-and-aft cutter, and we see how that the bigger ships are now designed with less top-hamper. We are now in the year 1781, and the beginning of August, when Europe was already war-weary, and hardly a year seemed to be free from some important battle. But in the Narrow Seas the only naval fight which took place during the whole of 1781 was that here shown by Muys.

It all arose through another of those convoys. For Admiral Hyde Parker with a small squadron of seven line-of-battle ships and one or two frigates, was escorting a valuable convoy of our merchantmen to the Baltic, but when off the western edge of the Dogger he encountered Admiral Zoutman who with a similar number of ships was proceeding north. A determined action began, continuing at close quarters for three and a half hours, when the Dutch retreated considerably damaged, though Parker's ships were unfit to chase. The enemy's *Hollandia* was leaking so badly that she foundered, but the flag from her masthead was taken home as a trophy to England. In the print the selected time is the end of the fight.

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In the spring of 1779, France and Spain united their forces, and in the waters of the West Indies Admiral Hyde Parker captured French frigates and a convoy of valuable merchantmen. More than one battle was destined to be fought off Martinique—for example—in April and May 1780, between Rodney and de Guichen, and in April 1781 between de Grasse and Hood, both occasions being indecisive. But in the French line engraving by Nicolas Barthélemi François Dequevauviller, made in 1790, we have that fight which took place in full view of Fort Royal, Martinique, on December 18, 1779. Admiral Hyde Parker was in command of the British fleet, the French senior naval officer being in charge of an inferior force escorting a French convoy of twenty-six sail. The attack is proceeding in the distance, whilst two French "64's" are seen sailing to the assistance of their compatriots. In the foreground are seen the guns and mortars, the garrison, ladies and negro servants of Fort Royal.

Dequevauviller had been born at Abbeville in 1745, travelled up and down the Mediterranean, and was an engraver of considerable merit, especially in regard to his atmospheric effects. In this print the detail of the figures in the foreground, the sailors and soldiers in the ships and boats, and the general arrangement of light are excellent. It is a good instance of French engraving just before the end of the eighteenth century. But Dequevauviller had an excellent subject to follow, the original painting

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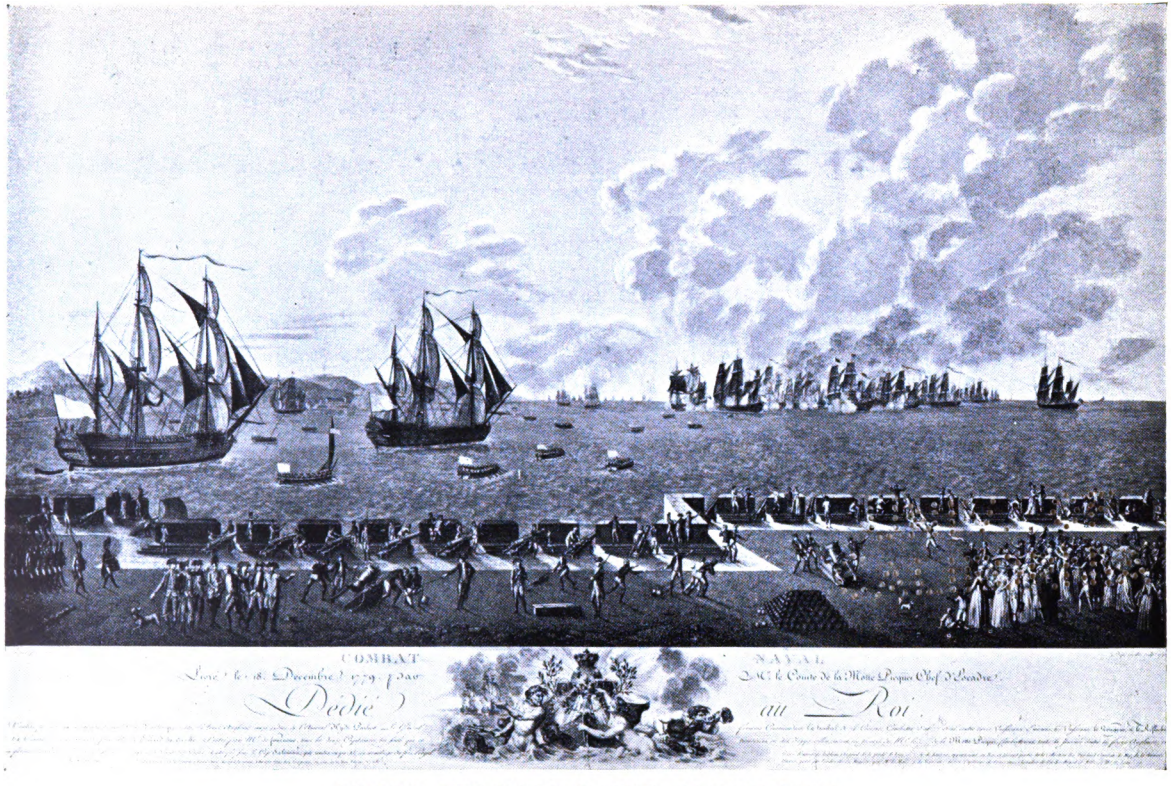

ACTION OFF FORT ROYAL, MARTINIQUE.

(*Engraved by N. B. F. Dequevauviller.*)

To face p. 104.

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being five feet long, and the work of de Rossel, who was a Capitaine de Vaisseau in the French Navy. Dequevauviller died in Paris during the year 1807.

During all this eighteenth-century activity on sea there were not lacking painters and engravers, both French and British, to record for ever the captures of single ships or convoys, the doings of privateers, the great fleet actions, the attacks on Gibraltar, the Battle of the Saints, of Quiberon Bay, frigate duels, Howe's victory off Ushant, the Battle of Cape St. Vincent, of Camperdown, and the Nile. The demand for these pictures, at a time when there were no illustrated press and no electric telegraph, was naturally great, and the pity is that, in the passing of years, so many of them have been allowed to suffer irreparable neglect. But he who wishes to make a collection of naval prints, representative, and covering most of the big events of the Anglo-French wars has still a very large field from which to gather his harvest; and quiet, careful study of the individual ships will bring joy and knowledge to anyone enthusiastic about the trend and development in naval architecture, its rigging and sail plans.

Such a painter as Nicholas Pocock, for example, could scarcely have depicted ships inaccurately, unless he had tried deliberately. For this Bristol man had himself been a ship-master and spent much of his time afloat making sketches, until he devoted himself exclusively to art and exhibited at

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the Royal Academy. Pocock was born in 1741, and eight years later there came into the world Francis Chesham, who was both designer and engraver. Like many other engravers of his time Chesham did plates of miscellaneous subjects such as views and Biblical scenes, but he also included naval incidents. And in the illustration facing p. 102 he has reproduced Pocock's *Battle of the Saints*, the feature selected being when the British Commander-in-Chief in the *Formidable* was leading through the enemy's line of battle.

It was the Battle of the Saints which saved England, and therefore it is not surprising that such artists and engravers as Dodd, Peltro, Fittler, Paton, Lerpiniere, Will and Luny, should amongst others have used this subject. Thus once again we see the reaction pictorially to a great danger. For the West Indies were imperilled, Britain stood the chance of being no longer mistress of the seas, the independence of North America was completed, and now France with Spain was concentrating on annihilating British power in those West Indies so far from the mother land.

The two opposing leaders were Sir George Bridges Rodney, a roué in private life but a blunt, courageous, yet cautious admiral, and the Count de Grasse, one of the greatest naval tacticians of the age and a pioneer of naval signalling. Rodney reached Barbadoes in February 1782, and there joined forces with Hood, the combined fleets now amounting to thirty-six sail. On April 5, 1782,

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Rodney was aboard his flagship at St. Lucia. "The great event that must restore the empire of the sea to Great Britain is near at hand," he wrote. On the 8th the enemy's fleet began putting to sea from Fort Royal, Martinique; on the 9th Hood's division had two brief actions with them, and when day broke on the 12th, Rodney had gained the weather gauge of de Grasse, the British fleet at 5.30 a.m. being on the starboard tack, fifteen miles from the group of islets off Dominica called the Saints, the wind being light and fluky.

The sight of these three-deckers is well suggested in the picture before us, and the French had thirty-four to our thirty-six. All the enemy vessels were large, but two of Rodney's were only "64's," and this forest of masts, this great cloud of canvas and tiers of wooden walls was a sight such as could not be seen every day even in that age. Until about noon the rival fleets lay in parallel lines practically becalmed. It was then that there followed a freshening breeze which enabled Rodney to take the *Formidable* and five other units, breaking through the French line at the rear of de Grasse's division, for the inconstant breeze had suddenly shifted to the south and made these tactics possible. The engraving here well illustrates this moment.

By Rodney's quick determination, the leading French ships were cut off and about half of their fleet isolated. Six of the enemy became prizes, including de Grasse's flagship *Ville de Paris*. This victory prevented Jamaica being captured, restored

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to Britain supremacy by sea: in fact saved for us the West Indies and future colonial enterprise. The Battle of the Saints is one of the world's decisive engagements, and every representation of this action in art is a reminder of the great national crisis which was averted by a gouty old admiral who saw in that fluky wind the chance of a lifetime: and took it instantly without hesitation.

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VI

THE NAVY IN ART

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CHAPTER VI

THE NAVY IN ART

SOME day, it is hoped, there will be in this country one comprehensive Naval and Maritime Museum in which will be housed all those ship models, marine paintings, and prints and relics, illustrative of our sea history, yet now scattered in so many different collections. But until that date shall arrive we have to remember—for it is surprising how few of the public appreciate the fact—that we possess at Greenwich in the celebrated Painted Hall what was intended to become "a National Gallery of Marine Paintings to commemorate the eminent services of the Royal Navy of England."

This idea sprang from the mind of Commodore Locker in 1795, and in 1823 when at last all the long generations of warfare seemed past and gone, the idea began to take shape, with the practical encouragement of George IV, who inaugurated the collection with pictures from Windsor, Hampton Court, St. James's Palace and Carlton House. In the course of time other donors added to these gifts, so that we have at Greenwich a couple of hundred paintings that may well be regarded as

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forming the nucleus for further undertakings in the future, and illustrate the story of English seafaring from the first prints and paintings till the present day.

In this Greenwich gallery there are many well-known eighteenth- and even nineteenth-century paintings which are known chiefly by the engravings that have been made after them: but in the pursuit of historical truth it will be necessary to omit some of these, and most popular, pictures altogether. For the fact must be admitted that such artists lived in an age which thought more of convention and dramatic composition and grandiose heroic effect than of a strict regard to accuracy. It is terribly difficult to get rid of a heresy, especially when it has had a long run; and it is even more difficult still when this error has been impressed on the imagination by having been brought up among prints faithfully copied from inaccurate masters. Age begets veneration, and in course of time one finds some of these freaks of artistic licence actually quoted to us as authorities.

Now there are two species of errors which have been perpetuated through marine artists and engravers. There is, firstly, the case of the contemporary artist who wilfully twists fact either to please his patron, or to satisfy his own aesthetic sense, or to emphasise some particular point out of all proportion with the other entities. But secondly there is the artist who generations, and even centuries, after the event paints a fight as he

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thinks it ought to have happened. Unable to speak with those who actually took part in the battle, too lazy to make researches among original documents, such a man is more concerned with the drawing, the colouring, and the composition of his picture than with the matter of truthful portrayal. And the greater popular success which such a picture may have obtained; the bigger the name of the artist; the more readily have prints been made and framed, gazed upon daily, year in and year out, for generation after generation. The print-collector will therefore have to make up his mind whether he is trying to form a consecutive pictorial narrative of strict naval history, or whether he regards these impressions for their decorative value and general nautical interest.

In regard to naval portraits, as opposed to naval events, the matter is different, and in the Greenwich collection there is a contemporary portrait of Howard, Commander-in-Chief of the English fleet against the Armada. This portrait is by Zucchero, who flourished about 1543–1616, but there are iconographs of practically all the outstanding seamen right down to well in the nineteenth century. For example we are able to see represented admirals and captains of the Stuart Navy, of the Commonwealth, of the Restoration, of Queen Anne and of Georgian times. The portrait of Admiral Vernon of Porto Bello fame, or of Mathews the enemy of Lestock, or of such distinguished sailors as Anson, Hawke, Hyde Parker, Howe, Nelson, and others are

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there for posterity to know what these historical personages really looked like in the flesh.

But it is when we examine some of the Greenwich battle pictures that we find our sense of truth assaulted by what may otherwise arrest our attention. There is no reason why an artist may not depict an event which happened years before he was born. We may approach his effort suspiciously and critically, but the least he can offer us is accuracy based on careful painstaking research; and even then we should feel happier with contemporary art. In another volume I have shown that many a genuine ship-model has been ruined because some person of a later age has re-rigged her according to his own ideas based on the practice in his own period. Is it not the same thing with regard to the so-called "restoration" which has spoiled the architectural beauty in some of our churches?

Now we know that de Loutherbourg, as an instance, was not born until nearly the mid-eighteenth century, and, therefore, when he painted the defeat of the Spanish Armada he had to rely chiefly on his imagination. That he was Court painter makes no difference to the fact that he neglected to study authoritative documentary information. When he purports to show us the fireship attack off Calais we find his details at variance with historical facts. But the eighteenth-century public wanted pictures that stirred the emotions rather than satisfied the intellect; and this painter of Drury Lane scenery gave them all that they deserved. Similarly, this

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same de Loutherbourg even when painting a subject of his own period, the action of the First of June 1794, again rearranged facts to his own purpose and has bequeathed to us a lie in paint. Indeed, he has in this picture placed the *Queen Charlotte* not where she actually was, but where Lord Howe endeavoured to get. And had she been there, it would have been her fault for allowing the *Montagne* to escape. No one who afterwards inspected the picture was more indignant than Rear-Admiral Bowen who had been master of the *Queen Charlotte* in that very battle. But the lie has had such a long run that it would be almost impossible now to counteract it.

Nor was de Loutherbourg unique, for Paton (of whose work we have already spoken) was equally guilty. In the picture of the Barfleur battle belonging to the La Hogue affair, Paton, who certainly ought to have known better, took the liberty of placing ships on the port tack instead of the starboard; and of placing the English flagship in the line of fire from one of her own vessels. Turner's picture of Trafalgar, also in this National Gallery of Marine Paintings, is so full of inaccuracies that historically it is nearly worthless. For it is a jumble of facts, a kind of synthesis, representative of no definite moment, but suggesting that a number of dramatic incidents happened, not separately over a period of several hours, but simultaneously. Herein, of course, we find ourselves quite prepared to be met with such truisms as " all art is selection,"

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and " the painter was endeavouring to give a general rather than a particular account of the battle." But, one may reply, this would disarm our criticism if only the artists had warned us that the title was only relative, and that, like the able-seaman during the Great War who attempted to write home to his mother letters of imaginary submarines sunk, and terrible hand-to-hand fights, all was related for mere maternal entertainment, and not to be taken too literally.

It is, therefore, not always safe to rely on information derived from these naval prints—unless this has been collated with history; for the artistic temperament is the very opposite of the critical, and it is only fair to warn the collector that in perhaps ninety per cent. of cases these sea fights are erroneously depicted. Just as a knowledge of anatomy is essential for a proper drawing of the human figure, so it is impossible for an artist to paint a naval battle without some knowledge of naval tactics. I have in mind a certain notorious instance of a picture supposed to represent an important naval engagement during the Great War. Another artist, attempting to improve on this failure, showed his work to a distinguished admiral, and a great tactical authority, who at once demonstrated that the artist had placed the ships in a totally impossible position. In like manner that reputable artist, Sir William Allan, R.A., President of the Royal Scottish Academy, in his picture at Greenwich, of Nelson at the Battle of St. Vincent

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boarding the *San Nicolas*, has placed a Spanish three-decker astern of the *Captain* so that Nelson's ship could easily be raked. And in the picture by George Jones, R.A., Nelson is seen fighting his way with drawn sword across the Spanish flagship's deck, whereas the cold truth is that there was no such fighting, but the *San Josef* surrendered before he had stepped aboard her deck.

Such divergencies then, must be expected and allowed for, so that it is far safer to approach these engraved reproductions of pictures rather as works of art than as records of immaculate fidelity. Exceptions there certainly are, and there are little touches which indicate the care and observant eye. In many a print the artist seems to have forgotten that the effect of a cloud of canvas is to drive the ship through the water, whereas his hulls are making neither bow wave nor stern wake: on the contrary the vessels might be glued to a sea of glass. But in the accompanying illustration of H.M.S. *Mediator* we are instantly attracted because the ship is a live thing, listing slightly and cutting her way through the sea with the bone in her teeth.

The picture was painted by Dominique Serres and engraved by Robert Pollard, who published it in 1784. The actual incident took place on December 12, 1782. Captain Hon. James Lutrell, R.N. was at sea in command of the 44-gun *Mediator*, when he fell in with a squadron consisting of three French frigates, *Eugene*, *Menager*, *Dauphin Royal*, together

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with the American frigate *Alexander*, and a brig. In the print is to be seen the *Mediator* at sunrise bearing down to attack this formidable array of enemy strength which mounted 130 guns to Captain Luttrell's much inferior weight. Hands are seen aboard the latter preparing for action, and the *Mediator* gallantly fought so that she managed to capture the *Alexander* and then, putting a prize crew aboard her, chased the *Menager* and captured her also. Just the kind of brilliant and gallant achievement that demanded perpetuation in art.

Dominique Serres, who was sixty years old at the time of this incident, understood shipping from actual experience, having run away to sea and eventually become master of a trading vessel. He himself was a Gascon, born in 1722, and when this vessel was captured by the British, Serres was just thirty. Brought to England he presently applied himself to art and became a famous marine painter, being eventually elected member of the Royal Academy and also marine painter to George III. In the Greenwich Painted Hall is Serres's picture of Barrington's victorious engagement with a French squadron off St. Lucia, 1778. Another of his principal paintings is that representing Lord Howe's victory over the Franco-Spanish fleets off Gibraltar, 1782. The *Mediator* picture was painted in 1783. But visitors to Hampton Court will find other instances of his art. Robert Pollard, who was thirty-three years younger than Serres, was particularly suited for engraving of such pictures.

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H.M.S. *MEDIATOR* AND FRIGATES.

(*Engraved by Robert Pollard.*)

To face p. 118.

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Born at the port of Newcastle-on-Tyne, he began life as a silversmith, afterwards painted sea-pieces, and finally applied himself to engraving. He died in 1838.

The value of these late eighteenth-century pictures is that among other things they do preserve for us the actual appearance and rig of contemporary craft. Models of ships sooner or later suffer as to their rigging, the hulls and spars get damaged: but by reference to these old-time paintings or prints we are able to see all sorts of vessels in all sorts of weather and every imaginable circumstance. Thus, from these and the works on naval architecture, such as by Stalkartt or Chapman, we can build up a pretty accurate vessel of the time. But what impresses one most is that state of stagnation, of conventionality, of lack of progress into which ship-design like many other matters had settled down by the end of the eighteenth century. Independent thought, fresh ideas, research, improvement on existing conditions: these factors seem to have received but dull encouragement. The conservative self-satisfying maxim of "what was good enough for my father is good enough for me" did precious little towards advancing the design, the methods of building, of rigging or sail planning of the new ships. It was a period characterised by pomposity and power rather than originality and scientific reason.

Thus we see men-of-war, East Indiamen, cutters and sloops, all so bluff-bowed, so heavy of quarters,

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so clumsily rigged, with such awkward gear that we know they could be nothing but unhandy. It is only because these crews were such real seamen that they managed to achieve such fine exploits as they did. Somehow the artists of that time took a delight in terrorising the landsman, in showing seafaring in its cruellest aspects with ships trying ineffectually to claw off a lee shore, masts crashing down on to crowded decks, the sea strewn with wreckage, boats being swamped, collisions impending, and other exciting conditions. Some of these pictures reflect this attitude more than others, as if striving after some terrifying tragic effect. You will find it even in Turner's work.

A good instance is to be seen in the engraving by William Watts (1752–1851), here reproduced, which was published actually in 1803. Here we have shipping running into the Medway past Sheerness fort, and nothing is wanting, no effort has been spared, to give the spectator the full melodramatic thrill of the situation. To-day when our Atlantic liners pass through exciting times in winter's gales it is not deemed necessary to paint the *Majestic* or *Berengaria* steaming through terrifying seas, or making a sensational arrival in Southampton with tugs doing their best to nose the gigantic hulls alongside the quays. But, somehow, our forefathers rather liked to pose and be represented in strong situations. It was as a result of the influence of those long years of war

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RUNNING INTO THE MEDWAY.

(*Engraved by William Watts.*)

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through which the country had passed, when glory and heroism were extolled to ultimate heights.

But in this print before us there is very much that will keep us interested. The man-of-war running in before the gale under shortened canvas and spritsail stowed fore-and-aftwise below the bowsprit, with some of the hands busy at the topsail halyards, others preparing to let go anchor, seems to be destined to be the centre of imminent trouble unless she can bear away in time. For, to the right of the picture, a sloop is across the fairway towing an open boat, both of whom seem certain to be run down. Incidentally the boat is being swamped, men being washed out of her, whilst in the sloop difficulty is being found by the crew in lowering the reefed mainsail, the boom threatening to take one man over the side. Whilst one hand forward is lowering away the peak and another the head sails, three men and one terrified female aft are watching the unfortunate people in the swamped boat, whose sails are being torn to shreds. There is every indication that if the oncoming man-of-war avoids the sloop, the latter's bowsprit will presently be snapped off against that other warship lying at anchor. Altogether a picture that stirs up unpleasant possibilities.

Apart from all this, however, there are many points which arrest our attention. In the sloop that fixed and not sliding hatch was characteristic. The windlass is seen forward, the mainsail is loose-footed, and the square stern as shown was customary

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in these fore-and-afters. The influence of the full-rigged ship was still very much in evidence, and it was not till there came a greater demand for speed in Revenue Cutters and in yachts, that cutters and sloops broke away entirely from big-ship architecture and were allowed to develop along their own lines, with results that are evident in the crack racing yachts of to-day, where conventionality of design has vanished before scientific progress.

But we are grateful, too, in Watts's print, for the picture he gives us of the docks, the couple of warships being built, and of a third fitting out, as well as of a fourth inside the sheer-hulk ready to receive her masts. Watts, who lived to be a centenarian, was really a landscape engraver, showing such subjects as country seats. But in this sea-piece he has done what many an engraver failed to do: he has made the incident real and vivid, the vessels are craft and not bits of cardboard; and the lighting is not the least satisfactory aspect. Such a print can be picked up for five or six pounds and is quite worth the money both for its subject and its accurate details.

As a commencement in print-collecting many amateurs will probably possess themselves of E. W. Cooke's well-known volume containing "Sixty-five plates of Shipping and Craft drawn and etched by E. W. Cooke" and published in 1829. Cooke lived in that interesting period of 1811–1880, which saw the biggest change that had ever

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happened to the ship in a generation. The passing of the wooden-wall battleship, the ending of the Honourable East India Company with an improved type of vessel to carry on the trade in open competition; the coming of the clipper ship, the advent of steam, the use of iron for making the hulls—these were some of the momentous changes which seemed to come so quickly after the nineteenth century had settled down to peace and prosperity.

Fortunately Cooke was sufficiently interested to depict for us those many types of shipping which were about to die utterly or to pass through immense modifications. Thus the enthusiast will find among these sixty-five plates (which can be picked up from a second-hand bookseller) such entertaining items as Nelson's *Victory*, a 74-gun man-of-war, first rates, frigates, brigs-of-war, East Indiamen, sailing colliers which used to bring the coal down the North Sea to London; galliots, smacks, Peter boats, schooners, Dutchmen, hatch-boats, West Indiamen, cobbles, luggers, boats, barges, wherries and so on. Some of these impressions are a little weak in the printing, but a good edition is well worth having and poring over. Certainly no Englishman of his period understood better those Dutch craft which so strongly left their impress on the fishing vessels, the yachts and traders up till the late nineteenth century. Cooke was of Dutch descent, he visited Holland no less than fifteen times, and his father was that skilled engraver who was chosen to reproduce Turner's sea-scapes,

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and in this work the son also was employed for a period.

Photography, by its cheap and multiple method, has made us forget that but for men like Cooke, and others of his age, we should be unable to transport ourselves aboard those fine old ships which had been so little altered for two and a half centuries, and then became obsolescent with a rapidity that now appears amazing even in our own age. Therefore any good print of a well-drawn contemporary ship should be preserved with great reverence and care.

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VII

LAST DAYS OF THE SAILING SHIP NAVY

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CHAPTER VII

LAST DAYS OF THE SAILING SHIP NAVY

DURING that period which began with 1789 and ended in 1805, we have a most eventful epoch in the world's history which included the French Revolution, the British blockade of French ports involving ceaseless watchfulness on the part of the British Navy; the Battle of the Glorious First of June, the Battle off Cape St. Vincent, the unhappy mutinies at Portsmouth, the Nore, in Admiral Duncan's ships off the Texel as well as in Jervis's off Cadiz; the Battle of the Nile, the Battle of Trafalgar and the death of Nelson. Sixteen years full of events that might have altered, and did change, the whole flow of international development.

If we wish to understand a period of history, there is nothing like getting at the contemporary documents, collating them, and in the required laepse of time arriving at an unbiassed verdict. Now, if we consider those last days when the wooden walls were attaining their climax of utility, we shall find that alongside of the illustrative prints and paintings of the time should be referred some of

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the letters by the very officers who served in the Fleet during those trying years when the future of our national progress was passing through its crisis. As against the ill-informed popular sentiments at home who believed that the Navy could do no ill, we have some rather shattering remarks in St. Vincent's correspondence with the second Earl Spencer during the time the latter held office as the First Lord of the Admiralty.[1] From such a commander-in-chief, and of such independence of character, we get certain expressed opinions on his own officers that show the Service very far from perfect even in its most renowned and venerated days. And this knowledge may mitigate some of the strictures which the Restoration Navy sometimes demands. In spite of the song-writers and ballad-makers, and the huzzas and heroics, the pictures in Vauxhall Gardens, and the presentations on the stage of that time, sailors aboard these ships were no more universally happy than were the commanding officers generally efficient.

In a private letter to Lady Spencer, Lord St. Vincent writing on December 27, 1798, remarked: "Lord Spencer's administration of the Admiralty has been the most auspicious to the honour of his Majesty's arms of any naval record. . . . But above all, I pride myself in preserving the health of this fleet, and in maintaining the most exact discipline, while surrounded by mutinous spirits

[1] See *The Private Papers of George, Second Earl Spencer*, Vol. iv, edited by Rear-Admiral H. W. Richmond. London 1924.

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among the lower orders, and factious discontents in a few of the higher. Happily, the force of example in those who have thought and acted right, has enabled this part of the force of the country to perform services of which there is no parallel in the page of history."

Whilst it is true that most commanders at the time received their meed of praise in verse, and every victorious sea fight set going some catchy song and kept alive that national enthusiasm which is so essential during war; whilst artists and engravers, with varying degrees of accuracy were solidifying those commendable sentiments, yet we must not be carried away by all this emotion and believe that everything with the Navy was well. Listen to St. Vincent writing to Spencer in March 1799. "My dear Lord, The promotion to the Flag has happily removed a number of officers from the command of ships of the line who at no period of their lives were capable of commanding them; and I am sorry to have occasion to observe that the present state of the upper part of the list of captains is not much better than it stood before."

A few weeks later he speaks of "the captains of frigates, whose dilatory conduct in port annoys me beyond expression. All the married have their wives there, which plays the devil with them, for although the measures I have taken imply a very strong disapprobation, hitherto no advantage has been derived from them." It was not merely frigate captains but even flag-officers that St.

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Vincent criticised. Rear-Admiral Berkeley he says, writing from Ushant, "is now manoeuvring to get to Spithead and has called his mother-in-law and my old friend Lady Louisa Lennox to his aid. . . . to this I have turned the back of my hand, by declaring that while I command the Western Squadron no ship shall go to Spithead unless to dock or shift lower masts."

A year later St. Vincent complains that "A captain commanding a squadron in this department has no authority, the captains having lived together, hail fellows well met, and there having been neither discipline nor subordination in the squadron." He was writing from aboard the *Royal George*, off Brest, in the middle of August 1800. A week later he follows this up with another letter which ends: "if your Lordship does not deliver me from the captains of those ships whose seniority makes them the more inconvenient, I really do not know what I shall do." Three days more and he writes: "I do assure you, my Lord, that if Captain Sawyer had not been the son of a man with whom I had an acquaintance of forty-eight years, and had been married to the daughter of a man I have known longer, he would not have commanded the *Russell* at this moment."

In that year there was a good deal of subterranean, underhand work going on, in which family influence allied to political interference was doing great harm to the service. Even St. Vincent, strong and fearless as he was, efficient and highly

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placed, found that subordinate officers in his fleet were being encouraged by patrons at the Admiralty to write letters behind his back. "Before this reaches your hands," he writes in that same August 1800, "Captain Sawyer's disobedience and contempt of my orders will have appeared in the fullest sense, and if your Lordship does not put an extinguisher upon the gossiping correspondence carried on between your Neptunes at the Board and the officers of every description in the squadron, neither I, nor any other person who may be thought fitter for the purpose, can command it."

In view of the fact that only three years previously had been the victorious Battle of St. Vincent, and that of the Nile was fought in the year following the Battle of St. Vincent, it is impressive to note that the "band of brothers" spirit seems so deficient. It comes as an equally great surprise when we find Lord St. Vincent complaining of one of his ships whose captain was incapable, whose first lieutenant was "unequal to the situation," the ship filthy both inside and out. Vice-admiral Pole St. Vincent refers to as "an old woman," and when St. Vincent first went to the *Royal George* flagship she was found to possess "neither discipline nor subordination," and even now "the men are dirty, lazy and disposed to mutiny, if they dared." Of the two other commanding officers St. Vincent reported to Spencer that apart from the possession of courage they had no other qualification, and adds the amazing statement

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"neither of them having the capacity to move the ship under their command, in the order of sailing or line of bearing." One often hears in these days of turbines and oil fuel the question: "However did they manage to get these old wooden walls out of such places as Portsmouth and the narrows of Plymouth?" The answer is that these vessels had not merely to work their tides, but to wait for a fair wind, "and I have known a ship detained in Hamoaze three months waiting for a wind to get into the Sound" remarks St. Vincent to the First Lord.

It is well, then, to bear all these truths in mind and not to be led away by the conventional spirit of the caricatures and prints. We know well enough the stern, blunt character of this commander-in-chief, and his personal contrast with Nelson. At the same time we cannot suspect that St. Vincent, one of the greatest admirals in history, with his shrewd keen habit of getting straight to the point, can have been guilty of gross exaggeration. Nobody realised better than he how serious it is to bear false witness against another of his own profession. "The honour of an officer," he once wrote, "may be compared to the chastity of a woman, and when once wounded can never be recovered." And amid the glamour of the great naval victories we can hardly blind ourselves to the domestic, internal difficulties which prevailed (to quote his own words) "in these days of insubordination and licentiousness." To admit this, is not to under-

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rate the gloriousness of the victories, but rather to make them still more meritorious when the human element was so far from being in a state of perfection.

And yet there is a grandeur of this wooden-wall-and-hemp period, a picturesqueness and blunt romance which nothing can take away from, and time will only make more attractive still. The old prints and pictures have captured this spirit, you can see the pride in the old ships, and we can observe the pleasure or criticism with which the artist's work would be received by officer or man who had served in these vessels. Who would not to-day sacrifice much to have seen the topmen aloft at the order "Set stun'sls," especially when the ship was rolling in a heavy swell and there was a danger that the flapping canvas might jerk the men off the yard? Prints and paintings of the beginning of Trafalgar show quite correctly Nelson's ships going into action with stuns'ls set, a sight which adds a special dignity to the preliminary of a great historic battle. At the order "Rig out, trice to hand" the booms were rigged out to the marks, but it was the custom never to grease these studdingsail booms, lest they should dirty the sails.

Often enough in these old prints you will see a frigate or a three-decker at anchor in a flat calm with sails all loosed for drying. Some of the early photographs of the clipper ships show this also. The routine in the Royal Navy for this evolution was for all ropes to be coiled down clear for running

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and sail covers off. Then at the pipe "Hands loose sails," there would be ordered aloft the captains of tops, the upper yard men and boom tricers. "Away aloft" would come the next order and the men would be seen climbing up, moving out along their respective yards smartly; and when the sails on each mast were ready to let fall, the officer in charge of the mast-head would signal this by holding out his hand. Then, at "Let fall" ordered by the commanding officer, every sail would be let fall together, buntlines run up, spanker brails eased down and headsails thrown off the jib-booms.

Sometimes in these old pictures you will notice the sails hauled out to a bowline, in which case at the order "Let fall, haul out, hoist away" the sails were dropped simultaneously, head sails run up, slack of spanker outhaul taken through, topsails hauled out taut from the yards by the top bowlines, t'gallant and royal sheets steadied taut. Thus canvas-crowned, an old-fashioned ship of Nelson's day with her dark hull and yellow streak along each tier of ports, and the portlids painted black, a figurehead forward and a quaint galleried stern aft, made one of the most beautiful sights conceivable as she reflected her glory in the mirror of the calm sea. No wonder that artists loved to represent these trim vessels under such aspects.

It needed more than an artist to show one of these men-of-war in a gale, shortening sail: for, unless the painter or engraver were himself a seafarer he was likely to make some fatal mistake and

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win the vituperative criticism of every sailor who should notice the picture. But there were some artists, as we have mentioned, who knew the ship under all conditions, and mentally went aloft again as they worked at their plates with engraving needle. Such technicians took a delight in showing that they knew their job, could depict the men trying to furl a royal in a hard breeze, after some daring and imprudent skipper had been carrying on too long. You have here a subject that only a real marine draughtsman could tackle if the details were not to be glossed over. He will show you the black, ugly squall rushing down to leeward, the t'gallant-mast at every pitch of the ship shaking and jerking the furlers, the canvas being blown out of the men's hands, so that they can hardly prevent themselves from being projected into the sea or falling head-first down to the deck. These tense moments, crowded with drama, belong to the days before steam took away so much of the sea's romance, and cheap process reproduction with-drew the need for the engraver with his patience and skill.

So, during the earlier years of the nineteenth century, you will find numbers of aquatints, line engravings and lithographs, embracing such subjects as the capture of the *Guillaume Tell*, some cutting-out expedition against the French, various frigate fights between the two nations, the Battle of Copenhagen, the action off Ferrol in July 1805, when Sir R. Calder defeated a Franco-Spanish

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fleet returning from the West Indies. Of the plates depicting Trafalgar there are a score to select from by such engravers as Fittler (after Pocock), Perrot, Hall (after J. T. Serres, son of Dominique Serres), Dodd, Duncan (after Huggins), and so on. But the collector will find also of this period, prints of minor naval actions such as that when Duckworth in the *Superb*, defeated off San Domingo a superior French fleet at anchor. Various plates, aquatints in colours, made for *Ralfe's Naval Chronicle* can be picked up for about a pound. And from about 1808 till 1834 Rudolph Ackermann was publishing many books with illustrations made by a large number of aquatinters whom he kept employed.

Of single-ship actions and notable captures there are plenty of moderate-priced prints available, including privateer incidents, scraps with Asiatic pirates and the like. That now obsolete vessel the brig, is preserved in some of these old pictures for future generations to admire. During those early nineteenth-century years British naval power attained a height never reached before by any other nation, and her ships rode the seas triumphant, indisputable. There was a wonderful halo round the service, admirals became demi-gods and their illustrious patronymics were bestowed by loyal fathers as christian names on children born at this time. Life-sized portraits of officers and paintings of battle scenes, etchings and engravings of midshipmen in knee-breeches and cocked hat

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THE *CHESAPEAKE* AND *SHANNON* ACTION.

(Coloured aquatint by M. Dubourg, after W. Heath.)

To face p. 136.

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with sword or sextant; or of Jack Tar dancing jigs in alehouses, or reposing in the bosom of his family complete with wife, infant, fiddle, bird-in-cage, model of last ship hanging on the wall, resolved never again to go afloat—these were the artistic expressions of the people who sang about "Hearts of Oak" and made ribald jokes concerning Napoleon and all the French. On the stage the sailor became a stock character, a recognised hero who deserved nothing but the best, and the tradition still survives.

And then came that unhappy affair of the war between the United States of America and ourselves, in 1812. "The two principal immediate causes" of this, wrote that fine American naval historian, Admiral Mahan, years ago, "were the impressment of seamen from American merchant ships upon the high seas to serve in the British Navy, and the interference with the carrying trade of the United States by the naval power of Great Britain." One of the most memorable and exciting incidents of those hostilities was the action between the American *Chesapeake* and the British *Shannon*, which took place on the first of June 1813. Of this numerous aquatints and engravings were made and are still obtainable. That which is here reproduced is a coloured aquatint by M. Dubourg after W. Heath, which was published and sold in 1816 by Edward Orme, publisher to the King and Prince Regent, and shows the American frigate being boarded. The print is worth several pounds to-day, but its value is less owing to its artistic merits or its

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nautical accuracy than to its quaintness. The blue-and-guilt uniforms, the curious pictorial composition, the melodramatic brandishing of sword and cutlass and the facial expressions are suggestive of a Drury Lane scene rather than a genuine sea fight. Still, this sort of thing delighted the eyes of our ancestors and commemorated an historic incident.

Everyone, of course, knows the story, and how evenly matched both frigates were in the duel. Captain Philip Broke was lying off Boston harbour in the *Shannon*, and had sent in a letter to Captain Lawrence of the *Chesapeake*, inviting him to come out and engage, though the letter never reached him. But presently the *Chesapeake* was seen emerging, and the British frigate sailed to meet her, opening fire at fifty yards range. Both ships fell foul of each other and a fierce fight ensued along those old principles which were characteristic of mediaeval encounters. The American's gunpowder chest exploded on her quarter deck and then the ship burst into flames. Broke with a boarding party now rushed on to the *Chesapeake*, and after a hand-to-hand struggle drove the enemy below.

In the American's main-top there remained a number of unpleasant sharpshooters who were as annoying as German machine-gunners were during the year 1917. But a gallant midshipman named William Smith ran along the *Shannon's* foreyard, hopped across monkey-like to the *Chesapeake's* mainyard, gained the top and dealt out the neces-

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sary punishment. Meanwhile another British midshipman cleared the mizzen-top by a continuous fusilade from muskets which were loaded and handed up to him. Thus eventually this keen struggle came to an end, the *Chesapeake* capitulated, but Captain Lawrence lay dying and Captain Broke was wounded in the head. Fortunately this wretched war ended in the following year with the Treaty of Ghent, and then at long last, after those centuries of fighting, Great Britain was in the position of mistress of the seas, with a whole century of naval peace before her save for those few occasions when there was any need for men-of-war to be employed, such as off Algiers in 1816, when that piratical hot-bed of old standing was finally cleaned up.

This bombardment of Algiers is commemorated in a number of aquatints and lithographs by Schotel, Sutherland and others. Between now and the eighteen-seventies Ackermann and other publishers issued prints of such naval occasions as the Battle of Navarino, 1827, when the allied fleets of Great Britain, France and Russia, under Admiral Codrington destroyed the Turkish and Egyptian fleets, relieving Greece from Turkish barbarism. But it was greatly to the credit of Britain that she now undertook operations for the suppression of that slave trade in which some of our Elizabethan seamen had to their discredit engaged from the West African coast.

In the early nineteenth century the chief sphere

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of the African slave trade was in the Bight of Benin, and the maps to this day mark with the words " Slave Coast " an area that attained notoriety for its inhuman traffic. After the downfall of Napoleon and the settlement with America, we were able to employ our navy for other purposes, and few more unselfish and philanthropic campaigns could have been devised than this fresh undertaking. A squadron of small ships was sent with instructions to harass slave vessels by every possible means, with a view to stamping out this commerce in live bodies. It was a kind of work which was backed by British public opinion, and appealed considerably to the British sailor with his love of freedom and fair play. It was, moreover, an opportunity to exhibit gallantry and to prove that the inspiration of the great eighteenth-century seafarers was anything but dead. Naturally these exploits by British men-of-war against Spanish slave ships, brigs and schooners, caused great interest at home, and were the subject of various paintings by William John Huggins, from which aquatints in colour were made by Edward Duncan. These prints are now scarce and fetch from ten to twenty pounds.

Huggins was born in 1781 and died in 1845. We admire his work because it shows the sailor artist; and, indeed, he had been to sea in the service of the Honourable East India Company and knew the rigging and handling of ships. There are both reality and freshness in his sea-pieces that instantly grip one. No wonder that he was

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appointed marine painter to William IV. Duncan was a water-colour painter and engraver, who was born in London during the year 1803 and lived till he was seventy-nine. From Robert Havell, to whom he was articled, Duncan learnt the art of aquatint engraving and in his prints of shipping, wrecks, fishing craft, and these slave-suppression incidents there are both mellowness and atmosphere as well as sharp individuality of the vessels themselves. Of these encounters three may be particularly mentioned, all of which were depicted by Huggins and Duncan.

The rarest shows the capture of the Spanish slave brig *Almirante*, on February 1, 1829, by H.M. Brig *Black Joke*, under the command of Lieutenant H. Downes, R.N. This print was published in the following year and dedicated to Commodore F. A. Collier. On June 6, 1829, H.M. Schooner *Pickle*, commanded by Lieutenant J. B. B. M'Hardy, R.N., captured the slave schooner *Boladora;* and on September 7, 1830, H.M. Brig *Primrose*, under Captain William Broughton, R.N., captured the Spanish slave frigate *Velos Passahera* off Whydah, Benin Bight. It is of the rare plate showing this last mentioned action that the accompanying reproduction is taken, having been published in 1831.

Now these slave traders were well armed, and among the most powerful were those under the Spanish flag. The *Velos Passahera* carried thirteen long 18-pdrs and a similar number of 12-pdr.

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carronades together with a crew of 185 men. The *Primrose* carried eighteen 32-pdr. carronades and 100 men. The slaver was commanded by de la Vega, a Spaniard, with a mixed crew of desperadoes of various nationalities, and bound for Havannah with 555 slaves on board. When Captain Broughton sighted her, and was disallowed to search her, his suspicions were fully confirmed, so at pistol-shot range he opened fire and after a brief carronade ran his ship alongside her and boarded, as shown very spiritedly in this picture. There ensued a hand-to-hand conflict, during which we lost three men killed and thirteen wounded; yet the slaver had forty-eight killed and twenty-one wounded. But, in spite of superior strength, the *Velos Passahera*, struck her colours within ten minutes of Captain Broughton leaping aboard her. He himself was severely wounded, but the enemy ship was his, the five hundred slaves were freed, and he soon recovered from his injuries.

But the *Black Joke*, this time under Lieutenant Ramsay was during 1830 to have another brilliant adventure. This little craft had a crew of only forty-four officers, men, and boys all told; and was armed with one long 68-pdr. and one carronade. Ramsay became aware that a Spanish vessel named the *Marinerito* armed with five 18-pdrs. and with a crew of 77 picked men, was lying inside the Calabar River, in that territory which we know to-day as Southern Nigeria. It was further ascertained that she had on board a

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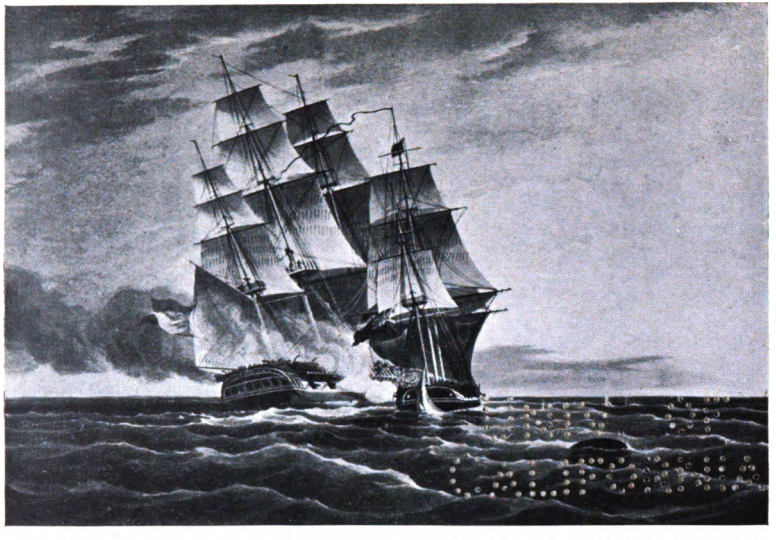

CAPTURE OF THE SPANISH SLAVER *VELOS PASSAHERA* BY H.M. BRIG *PRIMROSE*.

(*Aquatint in colours by E. Duncan.*)

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cargo of slaves who were destined for Cuba, and that her captain, a man of consumate courage, was anxious to meet with the little *Black Joke*, and to fight her to a finish. But it required more than this to frighten Ramsay, who forthwith sailed towards the river's entrance and during daylight hours stood off and on in order to induce the slaver to come out to sea. By night the *Black Joke* was back off the river so as to prevent the enemy eluding him.

After a few days of this monotonous cruising, Ramsay, at daybreak of April 25th, had the satisfaction of seeing the Spaniard coming down the river under plenty of sail. The *Black Joke* was well away from the land, but lowered topsails in order to remain unsuspected as long as possible. The *Marinerito* came out of the river, stood out to sea and did not sight *Black Joke* until within a few miles. It was then that the slaver received a fright and made all sail to escape. Ramsay likewise set every possible canvas and tried to catch up with the slaver, who, however, was a very fast craft and soon put a good distance between herself and the British brig. And then a remarkable thing happened.

For suddenly the breeze went dead, and there was the sight of both vessels getting out sweeps, and the sailing race had changed to a rowing match. The transformation was all to the advantage of the well-trained naval crew, but it was only after a long and trying pull that on the morning of

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April 26th the *Black Joke* got within range of the Spanish slave ship. The situation was not much improved, for whilst Ramsay was being fired at by a steady and accurate gunnery which was cutting his rigging to pieces, the brig did not care to reply as it would mean killing that densely packed cargo of negro slaves. The only possible tactics must therefore consist in boarding, and it says much for Ramsay's humanity that under the difficult circumstances he adopted this plan. So, when at last the two vessels were a little nearer, he ordered his men to lie down and be sheltered by the bulwarks. Then, selecting two of his best hands to secure the ships together the moment they touched, he watched his opportunity, brought them hull to hull, blazed away with his guns at point-blank range, and, before the smoke had cleared, leapt aboard the slaver's deck at the head of his men.

But so great had been the force of the collision that instead of all his men following, as had been intended, the *Black Joke* rebounded and left him with only ten of his people surrounded by desperate enemies. But a fourteen-year old midshipman named Hinds, who was the only officer left behind, had the sense and initiative to deal with the situation. He, therefore, urging the *Black Joke's* crew to pull hard, brought the brig once more alongside, lashed up again, and at once every unwounded man followed him to assist the captain. There followed a fierce hand-to-hand affair, determined and bloody, in which Ramsay and six of his men

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were wounded and one man was killed. But of the Spaniards, fifteen were slain, several more wounded, and in spite of numerical superiority the cowards lost heart, ran down below and begged for mercy.

The *Marinerito* now became Ramsay's prize and he took her into Fernando Po, where he put ashore so many of the wretched slaves as were alive. When the chase had begun, the Spanish captain had sent the whole five hundred of them under the hatches, where in that vile and crowded hold twenty died and sixty became so ill as never to recover. Ramsay had carried out his duty against the *Marinerito* with great zeal and plucky determination under most difficult circumstances, and the Admiralty rewarded him by promotion to the rank of commander.

Thus, even in minor operations such as these, the Navy continued to be active and to afford subjects for the painters and engravers of the day.

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VIII

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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CHAPTER VIII

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

WE could wish for no better first-hand insight into early nineteenth-century life than that supplied by Captain Marryat, the novelist, who entered the Royal Navy in the year 1808, took part in all Lord Cochrane's exploits till invalided from the Walcheren Expedition, and afterwards served in the Burmese War. And if we refresh our memories by turning to the pages of *The King's Own*, *Jacob Faithful*, *Peter Simple* and *Mr. Midshipman Easy* we get a vivid annotation of these contemporary prints, although Marryat is at times curiously and surprisingly inaccurate.

In spite of all the romance which belongs to things of the past, and to sailing ships especially, no one can dare regret that the conditions of life in His Majesty's Navy have altered since Marryat's time. From him and many another source, such as correspondence, courts-martial records and personal memoirs, we know well enough that if the men were usually a drunken, coarse lot of daring adventurers, the officers were not rarely brutal, dishonest and inefficient. That which saved the

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latter was their pluck, their gift of governance, sense of leadership, and determination to get things done.

One of the most brutal forms of punishment was that of flogging a man round the fleet. The unfortunate culprit was placed in the launch and a sorrowful procession was made round the fleet, stopping at each ship to receive so many lashes in the presence of each ship's company, who were ordered to witness the ceremony from the rigging. Whilst the launch was being towed by boats to the next ship the prisoner was allowed to sit down with a blanket over his shoulders until the next vessel's hull rose up alongside, and then the partially closed wounds were opened up again by the torture of more lashes. Now if there were, say, eight ships or a dozen in the fleet, this man was at the end of his sentence nervously and physically ruined for life. We can certainly congratulate ourselves that this form of barbarity is no longer part of naval discipline.

It would be difficult enough to defend those officers who employed the ship's carpenters and used Admiralty stores for making chairs, tables, chests of drawers to furnish their houses in Portsmouth; who kept the ship's armourer busy fashioning rakes and hoes for the garden; the boatswain making cots, carpets, and canvas chairs for the veranda; the steward employed in smuggling ashore beef, rum, vinegar and such consumable stores; whilst other members of the ship's company were

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compelled to make clothes for the captain's children under threat of being put on punishment for a week. No one would wish to see the hardships of impressment brought back into the service, when no poor man's liberty seemed safe, and apprentices to a trade were exempt only for three years from the date of their indentures. Obviously this was not the way to get the best men or to ensure a happy ship. On the other hand, the moral character and educational standard of these men were distinctly low, and it was only by a harsh discipline that mutiny could be kept just dormant and the duties of the ship carried on from day to day. At the same time, these men might be ignorant technically, but they understood human nature and knew when they had a full-sized real he-man for admiral or skipper. When the personality was such and they believed in his skill or courage, it was a blind confidence complete and unrestrained that would induce them to follow him anywhere. Read the following letter addressed to Nelson by his barge's crew aboard the *Foudroyant* on June 26, 1800:

"My Lord, It is with extreme grief that we find you are about to leave us. We have been along with you (although not in the same Ship) in every Engagement your Lordship has been in, both by Sea and Land; and most humbly beg of your Lordship to permit us to go to England, as your Boat's crew, in any Ship or Vessel, or in any way that may seem most pleasing to your Lordship.

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My Lord, pardon the rude style of Seamen, who are but little acquainted with writing, and believe us to be, my Lord, your ever humble and obedient servants, Barge's Crew of the *Foudroyant.*"

Much depended on the riggers in those days. Any carelessness or neglect in fitting or securing might not be noticeable or of great consequence until the ship got caught in a heavy gale and trying to weather a rocky shore. It was then that the lives of ships and men depended on the masts remaining intact, and the masts were relying on the support of the shrouds. To know that the work in the dockyard had not been scamped, to know that everything was as strong and reliable as personal attention could make it, was to mean a good deal of confidence under such trying circumstances of weather. These artists with their marlinspikes, their knotting and splicing, and so on, were able to go aloft and lay out along a yard and bend new sails to replace those which had just now been blown clean out of the bolt-ropes. Yes, these were sailormen right enough before they left the ship. But the modern man-of-war's man is less a seaman than a clever mechanic. The other day an officer told me the following story, but one could quote other instances which show the difference between the hands of the twentieth and the nineteenth century.

This particular battleship was not at sea, but lying at anchor in harbour, steady as if cemented to the sand below. Two men were told off to get

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into bo'sun's chairs and be hauled up the mast, which required painting. Both men refused what they considered a perilous job, and were sent before the ship's doctor, who agreed that the men were not shirkers, but genuinely terrified of going aloft. They were not punished, but their future promotion is practically condemned for the sole reason that like many other sound, healthy men they are so constituted that heights thrill them with fear, just as during the war those who suffered from klaustraphobia and yet had to sleep in dugouts went through the tortures of the damned. And yet in the days of hemp and sail what would have happened if two of the ship's crew, calling themselves seamen, had declined to go aloft and hand a t'gallant sail whilst the ship was lying over on her beam ends?

Awkward accidents were always liable in the best of these old sailing warships. The jib halyards might suddenly chafe through, the weather fore t'gallant sheet part, the main topsail brace and parrel carry away in a fresh wind with a nasty sea running. This was the time to test real sailorhood and cool pluck. Sometimes worse things happened, such as the carrying away of the chain plates of the rigging, and then matters began to look serious, for the mast might collapse any minute. On December 2, 1840, H.M.S. *Powerful*, one of the old 84-gun ships under Commodore Sir Charles Napier, was at 8 a.m. in a heavy gale of wind sailing along off Alexandria when a tremendous sea struck

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her. This carried away the port fore chains, and stove in six of the main deck ports. For a time it looked as if that foremast would disappear over the side and the ship be lost. But a 14-inch cable was taken from the foremast head, and each end was then passed through two of the main-deck ports, and set up by tackles and secured. By this means both ship and mast were saved, and sail was again carried on this foremast in spite of the velocity of the wind. For during this gale forty-four vessels were lost, including H.M.S. *Zebra*; and H.M.S. *Pique*, 36 guns, was dismasted whilst lying with four anchors down. From a human point of view nothing but good seamanship could possibly have saved the *Powerful*.

And yet, if we look into the matter, we know well enough that commanding officers of His Majesty's ships in the early nineteenth century were no navigators. Marryat, or a volume of an admiral's autobiography covering that period, will tell us all we want to know. In *Peter Simple*, for instance, we have in that picture where Simple is being examined for lieutenant the following candid passage: "The questions in navigation which were put to me were very few, for the best of all possible reasons, that most captains in His Majesty's service know little or nothing of navigation. During their servitude as midshipmen, they learn it by *rote*, without being aware of the principles upon which the calculations they use are founded. As lieutenants, their services as to navigation are seldom

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required, and they rapidly forget all about it. As captains, their whole remnant of mathematical knowledge consists in being able to set down the ship's position on the chart. As for navigating the ship, the master is answerable ; and the captains, not being responsible themselves, they trust entirely to his reckoning."

And if to-day the naval officer is necessarily more of a scientist and a specialist, the relations with his men have changed so entirely that the following picture from *Peter Simple* seems to us in our age grotesque. Peter Simple had gone forward to speak to Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, on the forecastle, and the ship's cooper " jostled him in passing. ' Beg pardon, sir,' said the man, ' but the ship lurched.' ' The ship lurched, did it ? ' replied the boatswain, who, I am afraid, was not in the best of humours about his wardrobe. ' And pray, Mr. Cooper, why has heaven granted you two legs, with joints at the knees, except to enable you to counteract the horizontal deviation ? Do you suppose they were meant for nothing but to work round a cask with ? Hark, sir, did you take me for a post to scrub your pig's hide against ? . . . When you pass an officer, it is your duty to keep at a respectable distance, and not to soil his clothes with your rusty iron jacket. Do you comprehend me, sir ; or will this make you recollect in future ? ' The rattan was raised, and descended in a shower of blows, until the cooper made his escape into the head."

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The collector who is trying to form an historical catalogue of naval events will find a number of examples by Deroy and others consisting of aquatints and lithographs illustrating those operations off the Syrian coast during the years 1838–1840. Prints of vessels of the Anglo-Turkish and Anglo-French squadrons and the bombardment of Acre fetch several pounds apiece. In 1831 began the first of the Chinese wars; eight years later this was renewed, and in 1841 there was still more trouble. Aquatints and lithographs, both in colours, are obtainable, showing some of these operations such as the small squadron under Captain Belcher burning a fleet of Chinese junks; and the capture of Amoy. Sentimentally these incidents are interesting, for they link up the dying East India Company with the Royal Navy that was about to be modernised and pass away from its last trace of mediaeval influence. Steam was about to force its advance determinedly and transform the whole character of the service, but the old school of ships' officers and men as we have just seen them, was to die hard.

Reproduced here is a picture from an aquatint in colours of H.M.S. *Cambrian*, which was built at Pembroke as late as the year 1841. This was a sailing frigate of thirty-six guns, which served during this and later Chinese wars, and it was her boats which took an important part in the reduction of the Taku Forts. This aquatint is another example by Edward Duncan, but after N. M. Condy, and it is

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worthy of careful study not merely for its beauty but for its sense of reality and fidelity of detail. We see in this *Cambrian* that interesting class of ship, the naval frigate, reaching the peak of her development with her overhanging stern and enormous topsails. Lying there in that summer calm under shelter of the land, it is just such a picture as the elder Van de Velde, had he been alive, would have loved to paint. But there is something almost symbolical in this subject, for to the left the artist has shown that new-fangled thing, the paddle steamer, just opening out at the other side of the island; and in a very few years such creatures as these frigates of brilliant memories were to pass out of the active list and become mere hulks or depôt ships somewhere up harbour, never allowed again to spread their areas of canvas or voyage across the world.

The very style of such paintings and prints suggests those early Victorian days of heavy furniture and stuffed birds and wax fruit under glass cases and severe family portraits in heavy gold frames. But a great change was coming over life in all its aspects, and now that people had time to think and invent instead of continually fighting, education was to spread, naval science was to undergo a complete revolution, iron and presently steel were to banish wood for hulls, marine engines were to take the place of sails, cruisers were to do the work of frigates. The type of seaman and officer was in a state of transition, too, but the old spirit which

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had been winning those victories since Trafalgar was retained, fostered and developed. Such prints as these, when they can be purchased for seven or eight pounds, are well worth the amateur's attention even as an investment, for they are becoming rarer every year, and already those of the early steamships are getting scarce and will soon be regarded with a respect of their own.

In spite of Lord Melville's notorious dictum that it was the duty of the Admiralty to discourage to the utmost of their ability the employment of steam vessels, as they considered the introduction of steam was calculated to strike a fatal blow to the naval supremacy of the Empire, no fewer than seventy steam craft were added to the Royal Navy between the years 1823 and 1840, and the first iron warship, the armed paddler *Nimrod*, had been launched in 1839, though originally intended for the East India Company: in 1846 came that iron, ill-fated steam "frigate" *Birkenhead*, which sank off Simon's Bay six years later.

But the glory of sail even yet had not deserted the capital ships, and our grandfathers were to see one of the grandest sights which ever human eyes have witnessed, and will assuredly never be observed again: the British fleet at sea under sail. In our frontispiece we have a lithograph by H. J. Vernon which shows *The Channel Fleet Bearing up and making sail down Channel* on May 13, 1846. Just eighty years ago, and yet it might be centuries since when we think of the utter contrast with

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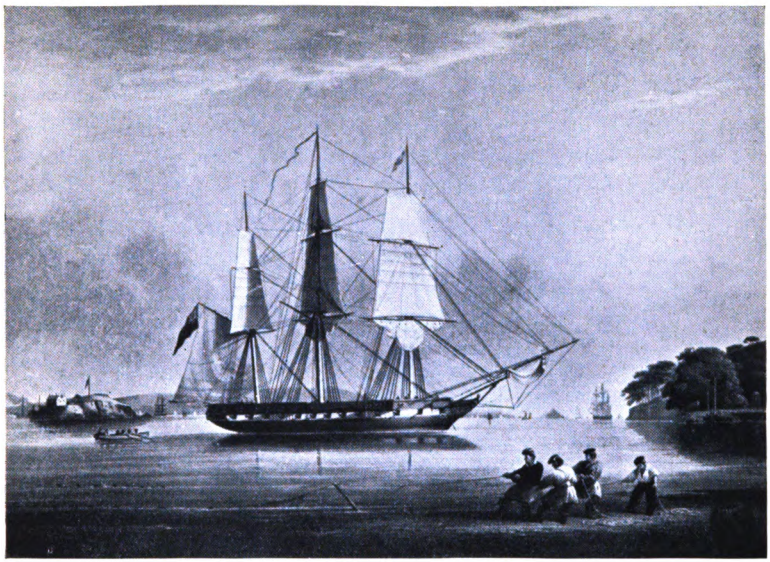
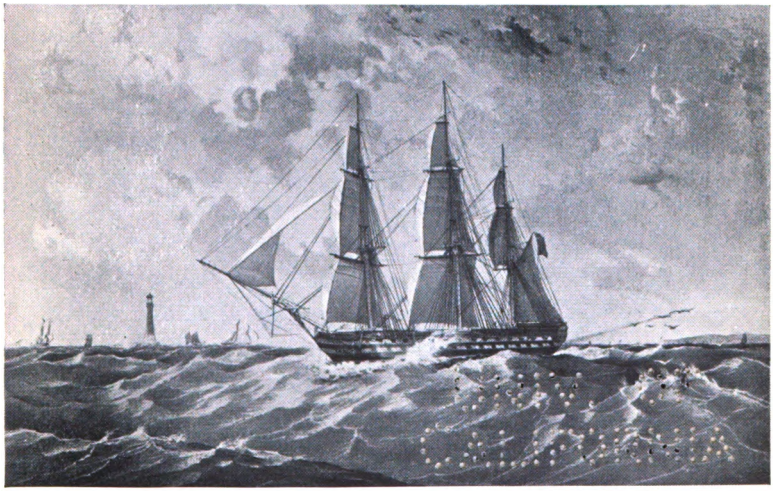


H.M.S. *CAMBRIAN.*
(*Aquatint in colours by E. Duncan.*)



H.M.S. *BELLEROPHON.*
(*Coloured lithograph by T. G. Dutton.*)

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our post-Jutland vessels. Few things could more make one realise the marvellous transformation which has come over the service in one generation of four-score years. Let the collector hang up one of these lithographs alongside one of those modern half-tone reproductions of the Grand Fleet belonging to the time when the Armistice was signed, and he will find much over which to ponder.

Reading from left to right, the names of these ships in Vernon's lithograph are: the *Trafalgar* (120 guns), *Superb* (80), *Queen* (110), *St. Vincent* (120), *Vanguard* (80), *Albion* (90), and *Rodney* (92). We may well wish to take off our hats to the Senior Officer who could handle such a fleet of not too handy ships and take them down the English Channel; and there is not an officer alive to-day, nor are there living crews, who could move these ships under canvas. Contemplating such a picture, still more do we think with admiration of that old seamanship carried out under such difficult circumstances, and never less easy than when using the Narrow Seas.

Lithography is of course the art of obtaining prints from that kind of stone, of which a particular species was obtained from Bavaria. The design is drawn on the surface by the artist in greasy chalk which is retained in the stone's pores, the stone being afterwards etched with a mixture of acid and gum. When the ink-roller is passed over it, the ink adheres only to those parts which have been covered with the greasy chalk. The process

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had been invented by Aloys Senefelder, whose period is covered by the dates 1771–1834, and began to be known well from the year 1818. At first it was used chiefly for printing music, but during the second quarter of the nineteenth century pictures by this method were being reproduced on a numerous scale both in England and abroad, and lithographic printing firms followed. Among English lithographic artists of the nineteenth century may be mentioned such names as Cattermole, Wilkie, Boys, Nash; and in regard to marine subjects especial mention must be made of T. G. Dutton, who was one of those who drew their own pictures on to the stone.

I have here included his fine coloured lithograph of H.M.S. *Bellerophon* as seen between the Eddystone and the entrance to Plymouth Sound in a fresh breeze with t'gallants set. This 78-gun ship was the second of that name and at this time was commanded by Captain Robert L. Baynes, C.B., R.N. She was a fine example of her time, having been launched at Portsmouth in 1818 and having seen a good deal of service. She was over twenty years old when she formed one of the seven British line-of-battle ships off Acre in November 1840. Here the shoals prevented them from getting no nearer than about half a mile from the shore where they anchored, and the bombardment of Acre began, the shallows having on the previous day been surveyed and buoyed. The fire from the garrison was less accurate but brisk, and after a

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couple of hours one of Acre's powder magazines blew up, destroying a large part of the town, batteries, soldiers as well. The garrison became disheartened, and half an hour later the enemy's fire ceased. On the following day the place was taken. This operation off Acre is interesting because this old-fashioned type of sailing ship co-operated with a number of steam vessels, though of a somewhat primitive kind. But *Bellerophon* was also destined to be present at Sebastopol during the Russian War of 1854–6. She had thus had a long life of activity, and when she returned to England—and it was obvious that this type of vessel was now obsolete—she took on a new if more leisurely career, becoming a depôt ship at Portsmouth right down till the year 1890. There is another lithograph, also by Dutton, which shows *Bellerophon* and *Rodney* being towed out of action after the Sebastopol bombardment.

When after the Crimean War there was again trouble in China, and Admiral Sir Michael Seymour was there in command of a fleet, a notable action took place on another first of June, the year being 1857. The scene was Fatshan Creek, and resulted in our capturing or destroying practically the entire Chinese flotilla. Of one incident in this undertaking, Sir Oswald Walters Brierly made a painting which was lithographed by W. Walker. Brierly, who was born in 1817 and became a celebrated marine artist, had studied shipping at Plymouth first hand. He was lucky enough to start off

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round the world in 1841, but returned to England and went with the Fleet to the Baltic, and in 1867–8 accompanied the Duke of Edinburgh round the world. Brierly also published a series of lithographs entitled *The English and French Fleets in the Baltic*, 1854. For Queen Victoria he made sketches of the memorable naval review at Spithead in 1856, and some years after having been made her marine painter was rewarded with a knighthood.

After this date, confining ourselves strictly to old *naval* prints, the collector finds the sphere naturally limited, although under the general category "nautical" he will find pictures of clipper ships and others belonging to the Mercantile Marine. But if we cross the Atlantic for subjects we shall find that Dutton, Walker and others made lithographs of incidents of the American Civil War, and besides these British impressions there were German lithographs too. But beautiful as such coloured work in the lithographs of Dutton and his predecessors unquestionably is, where ships and sea become as nearly as possible tangible things, yet it is those eighteenth-century prints which, in spite of their defects and occasional inaccuracies, will still form a most magnetic attraction for the collector. Art, romance, peril, drama, ships, antiquity—all these powerful forces seem united when we pore into the relics of an age that has meant so much in the world's progress and the trend of nations. The modern photograph fades,

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but these early plate impressions, mellowed by time, increase their value to us day by day.

Nor will the collector find lacking for his study other instances of those single-ship pictures showing the early ironclads, the first screw line-of-battle ships, or of those Victorian ships which went exploring Arctic regions. There is the well-known aquatint by Dodd showing the mutineers casting adrift from H.M.S. *Bounty* the captain and officers. There are lithographs of such interesting naval vessels as that picturesque *Volage*, which some of us are not too young to remember with her sails and trim spars looking so much as if she really belonged to Nelsonian days that you almost forgot she was a " screw " corvette which had been built at the Thames Ironworks in 1869.

There are prints of early and mid-nineteenth-century men-of-war in squalls and gales of wind, or hove-to whilst lowering a boat to pick up a man fallen overboard. There is that very rare aquatint in colours by Dodd, published in 1792, showing the *Victory* with her division sailing from Spithead, a print which nowadays fetches over twenty pounds. And those who care to see that unusual creature, a 120-gun steam battleship, have several instances to select from, such as the *Trafalgar*, which was built at Woolwich in 1841 but afterwards had her armament reduced. Some of the third-class cruisers of the eighteen-seventies, or those charming little brigs, make any ship-lover stop to admire their representation time after time. For

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quaintness and historical association, if not for beauty, those early paddle sloops have a certain value, but they are not likely yet to tempt the collector as those line engravings of the eighteenth century.

If there is a unique joy in studying these prints alongside the writings of the novelists, one word of warning is necessary. We shall find it more reliable to refer to the letters and other historical documents when some point of dispute arises, as it often does in these impressions. Marryat certainly gives in his novels the real naval atmosphere, the officers and men are alive and active, and much of the detail is most illuminating. One must remember, however, that as soon as he wanders outside his own immediate period and experiences he becomes inaccurate and no longer trustworthy. As he was born in 1792 and died in 1848 we know well enough the limits of his practical knowledge. But when he writes of seafaring belonging to a time a hundred years previously we find his work full of anachronisms. For this required the energy and attitude of an archaeologist which Marryat did not possess. As an instance he makes pigtails to be worn before that period 1785–1823, which was the length of time in which the practice existed. The fact is that Marryat set out to give those early nineteenth-century readers a hearty good yarn, well knowing that neither he nor they cared to bother much about accuracy in detail, so long as the story seemed generally correct.

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We can accept him, then, when he is talking about the service as it was in early Victorian days, or immediately before; and we can appreciate his clever mingling of fact with fiction, actual events and anecdotes, personal reminiscences all woven into a different fabric. He helps us to see and take part in naval life, in the gales and exciting adventures, and especially grateful are we for the lifelike naval portraits of his contemporaries. But when he introduces carronades sixty years before the Carron Iron Works were ever started, we begin to exercise a feeling of suspicion.

The collector will find in the course of his hobby a number of prints depicting those old Revenue cutters. There are not very many of them about, but a few are obtainable. There is a pair of aquatints, for instance, belonging to the year 1833, by C. Rosenberg after W. J. Huggins, and show the Revenue cutter *Prince George*, of 72 tons. This couple of illustrations now changes hands at over £20. And there is a slightly earlier lithograph in colours,[1] by T. G. Dutton after H. Rolfe, which shows the Revenue cutter *Vigilant* of the year 1828 towing in a barge which had on board contraband spirit. Now we know that Marryat has always been regarded as an expert in his knowledge of Revenue cutters and their work against smugglers: but notwithstanding this, we find Marryat even in this respect undependable. We need not weary

[1] Reproduced in my book, *The Ship Under Sail*. London, 1926.

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the reader by citing too many instances, but one will here be sufficiently convincing. Marryat seems to imply that a Revenue cutter sent a shot across the smuggler's bows. I have spent many long days examining some hundreds of official records and know that an *un*shotted gun always was fired and the Revenue colours, both pennant and ensign, were always hoisted before that, no matter whether it was night or day. Assuredly the smuggler's vessel would not be fired at as the novelist suggests. In recent years other nautical investigators have so discovered Marryat to be wrong in various other matters under this category that they can only amaze one.

For Marryat, be it remembered, served in the *Rosario* from 1821 to 1822, doing Revenue duty in the English Channel, and ought to have known what he was writing about. The truth is that he was a thrilling, if careless and loose, writer. These points here are stressed, because in going over some of the items in these prints of cutters or other vessels the collector may find that picture and printed page do no agree. It is therefore necessary to be on one's guard, and to bear in mind that historical accuracy on the part either of artist or author was not a distinctive virtue up to that period which ends when these cutters and strenuous smuggling were already out of date. We must be careful to avoid trying to prove too much from these prints, and heated arguments have arisen among ship-lovers owing to having accepted pictorial

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evidence merely because it is old. Elsewhere in this volume I have emphasised that even battles painted by contemporary artists are often historically incorrect, and on the other hand we find that contemporary writers are themselves not always accurate. Whom, then, shall we believe?

The answer is that we must take these prints for what they were intended—first and foremost, as all art aims to do, to give pleasure. When the original pictures of a ship in action, in a gale, in a moment of crisis, or on a sunny sea tearing along with a spanking breeze were painted, the object of the artists was primarily to rouse the beholder's emotions. The engraver copied these works because the public required to see these pictures for themselves, to share in the enthusiasm and to respond to the excitement which had been aroused in others. Thus we must approach these naval prints in that same spirit with which they were made, remembering that the artists were not working to obtain praise from the nautical antiquarian and archaeologist of later generations. But if we take these prints for what they were meant to be, the pleasure and delight, the stirred enthusiasm will overcome any annoyance which follows on too meticulous anxiety that every minute detail should be beyond all criticism.

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IX

PRINTS OF NAVAL LIFE

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CHAPTER IX

PRINTS OF NAVAL LIFE

APART from the subjects of naval battles, the protraits of commanding officers, plans of engagements, and pictures of the ships themselves, the collector will wish to include those satires and caricatures of naval life, groups of officers showing the uniforms of the day, and such miscellaneous illustrations as those which by the combined efforts of artist and poet celebrated victories of outstanding interest. Indeed, such prints as these go a long way towards filling up gaps in naval narrative and show the sailor not merely afloat fighting for his ship and country, but in the reaction from these strenuous times enjoying the pleasures of the shore.

There are, of course, memorable prints showing the death of Nelson and other illustrious officers, and of brave captains leading their men to storm some fort; and the scenes on board, especially in the captain's low-roofed cabin, with an accompaniment of much alcohol and good cheer, give us an insight into the lives of commanding officers. There are

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not wanting, either, plenty of prints showing the Admiralty buildings, for these engravers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries loved to reproduce architectural subjects. In the frontispieces of contemporary eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century books we get plates which have for all time set down the conditions of nautical life afloat and ashore, and incidentally they assist us in visualising the dress of the seaman and officer at various dates. Other engravers have shown either with sympathy or satire the sailor coming home to his family, or returning from Anson's flagship with an embarrassment of riches.

Eighteenth-century prints take us inside the Ward-room, with its heavy drinking and entertainment. Hogarth's picture of an inn with the Ansonian sailor on top of the coach after landing from his round-the-world voyage is of course well known. Among the satirical prints you will find officers in naval costumes with the stern windows as background and little balloon-like puffs of expression emerging from their mouths, in the manner of those early caricatures one used to see in *Punch*. There is scarcely an aspect of the sailor's life which the engraver has not shown, irrespective of rank or rating, on board ship or on land.

The seaman is shown in these eighteenth-century prints revelling with his womenfolk in taverns of the town, on Greenwich Hill, on board ship, on coaches bound for London after the ship has been paid off at Portsmouth. With his fiddle and songs

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he is entertaining his fellow-travellers and disturbing the quietness of each village as the horses are exhorted to hurry onward. More sentimental prints show Jack in some sylvan setting presenting to his swain some keepsake brought from abroad, having just landed from his ship, shown riding at anchor in the distance. Early nineteenth-century caricatures of midshipmen and others are valuable because they show the varying development of naval uniform, as the eighteenth-century engravers have informed us concerning the seamen's costumes. The tearful farewells and the happy reunions after long voyaging formed most popular subjects in regard to lower-deck life.

Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827) and George Cruikshank (1729–1878) with their sense of satire, their clever ability to caricature, and their art as etchers have left us pictorial material dealing with naval life; and if for no other purpose whatsoever their prints are worth collecting. Dominic Serres also has left us plates which illustrate naval officers' dress of his period: but there are many other artists who either by satire or with a regard to portraiture have enabled us to build up an illustrated chronology under this heading so that we know just how officers and men appeared, from admirals downwards.

You will find that a favourite theme of the artist was a group of country folk with Jack Tar the centre and hero, holding forth on his adventures afloat during his last commission. In those years

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when there were still no railways and no one travelled abroad except for some special reason, and most inland people had never sighted the sea, the homecoming or departure of the sailor was no small event. That which he was pleased to relate, whether of fighting or of cruising, was believed implicitly and could not be contradicted. Wooden-legged, one-armed, lacking an eye, home from the wars against the French, the attitude towards the sailor was one of hero-worship and gratitude. And this gratitude is shown in certain prints to be intensified when Jack returns with a handful of watches and jewels to present to his women.

The mezzotint here reproduced, entitled *Jack's Return After Lord Howe's Glorious Victory*, is a good example of the kind of print of which we have been speaking. Howe's Battle of the Glorious First of June was fought against the French in 1794, and two months later this print was published by Laurie and Whittle of Fleet-street, London. In the picture will be seen one of Lord Howe's seamen just come ashore with a purse of money and about to be offered a bowl of drink. Below the print were engraved a set of verses commemorating the victory over the French. The first verse and refrain run as follows, and we can readily imagine how popular these sheets would be at a time when feeling was so tense. Can we not imagine the honoured place which such copies would possess, suitably framed, in the hall of the coaching inns of London, Portsmouth and elsewhere ?

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JACK'S RETURN AFTER LORD HOWE'S GLORIOUS VICTORY.

To the Tune of, Oh Dear what can the matter be.

O! Dear had I but words to tell.
O! Dear what I this moment feel.
O! Dear how all my spirits reel.
O! how the French have been drubb'd!
Now Fearnought your jaw-beare off with your bragging,
And no longer farcaft to your Navy be vagting;
For by heavens Tehink you have had a good roafting
Then let us continue to fight.
O! Dear &c. —

Our fleet has engag'd and the French as expected,
And wifhd by all ranks, fave a few diffaffected;
Have not only been tuck'd up, but alfo diffected
Then let us continue to fight
O! Dear &c. —

Two Ships we have funk, befides fix that we've taken,
The reft by our guns have been cruelly fhaken.
And will probably not all efcape with their bacon.
Then let us continue to fight.
O! Dear &c. —
Their Admiral, like a brave fkilful commander,
Not wifhing his own or his men's blood to fquander,
But hafe'd for a while, then turn'd tail like a gander.
Then let us continue to fight.
O! Dear &c. —

Liking not the rough manner in which Britons carry,
In lefs than an hour he fhit in a flurry,
And was damnably glad to make off in a hurry.
Then let us continue to fight
O! Dear &c. —

Poor fellow! I grant that 'twas no mighty wonder,
That he made fuch a rafcally cowardly blunder.
For it was the firft time he had heard Britifh thunder.
Then let us continue to fight
O! Dear &c. —
The Governor, I think will not now talk of Slaughter,
And fwear they will grant to the Britifh no quarter
For, for one man, two fifty can make a head fhorter.
Then let us continue to fight.
O! Dear &c. —
Friends believe for indeed 'tis a well grounded notion,
That Britons for ever fhall rule o'er the ocean.
Whilf buff and ftrong hearts their courage in motion,
Then let us continue to fight.
O! Dear &c. —

To our country and king our aflifrance we're bending
For our freedom our laws and our lives we're contending,
And to fuch a bright caufe there muft be a bright ending.
Then let us continue to fight.
O! Dear &c. —
Then here's Howe and the failors of Britian for ever,
For we never need fear thefe French fcoundrels no never,
Whilft defended by heroes fo brave and fo clever,
Then let us continue to fight
O! Dear &c. —

Publifhed 1 Aug.t 1794 by LAURIE & WHITTLE 53 Fleet Street London.

(From the contemporary mezzotint.)

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O! Dear had I but words to tell,
O! Dear what I this moment feel,
O! Dear how all my senses reel,
O! how the French have been drubb'd!
Now, France, hold your jaw, and leave off with your boasting
And no longer success to your Navy be toasting,
For, by heavens, I think you have had a good roasting,
Then let us continue to fight.

Not exactly poetry this, but it was the hearty sort of doggerel that the simplest patriot could understand and to which he could respond; picture and verses being nothing better than the expression of boisterous joy in the hour of victory. And yet as soon as all danger was passed, it was the sailor who was the first to be forgotten or painted in the plainest of colours. This attitude is so well reflected in its contemporary literature. It was Henry Fielding who wrote of the eighteenth-century seamen, "I am convinced that on land there is nothing more idle and dissolute; in their own element, there are no persons near the level of their degree, who live in the constant practice of half so many good qualities. They are, for much the greater part, perfect masters of their business, and always extremely alert, and ready in executing it, without any regard to fatigue or hazard. The soldiers themselves are not better disciplined, nor more obedient to orders than these whilst aboard; they submit to every difficulty which attends their calling with cheerfulness, and no less virtues than patience and fortitude are exercised

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by them every day of their lives. All these good qualities, however, they always leave behind them on shipboard. The sailor out of water is, indeed, as wretched an animal as the fish out of water. . . ."

Leigh Hunt, in one of his essays, has also attempted a picture of the seaman's behaviour ashore. "The sole business of a seaman on shore, who has to go to sea again," wrote this critic, "is to take as much pleasure as he can. The moment he sets his foot on dry ground he turns his back on all salt beef and other salt-water restrictions. His long absence, and the impossibility of getting land pleasures at sea, put him upon a sort of desperate appetite. He lands, like a conqueror taking possession. He has been debarred so long, that he is resolved to have that matter out with the inhabitants. They must render an account to him of their treasures, their women, their victualling-stores, their entertainments, their everything; and in return he will behave like a gentleman and scatter his gold."

The same author refers to him ashore having let "his jacket fly open," "his hands half open, as if they had just been handling ropes." "He is proud of appearing in a new hat and slops, with a Belcher handkerchief flowing loosely round his neck, and the corner of another out of his pocket. Thus equipped, with pinchbeck buckles in his shoes . . . and perhaps a cane or whangee twisted under his other arm, sallies forth to take possession

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of all Lubberland. He buys everything that he comes athwart. . . . He has fiddles and a dance at the 'Ship,' with oceans of flip and grog; and gives the blind fiddler tobacco for sweetmeats, and a half-a-crown for treading on his toe."

"He goes to the Port playhouse with Bet Monson, and a great red handkerchief full of apples, gingerbread nuts, and fresh beef; calls out for the fiddlers and 'Rule Britannia'; pelts Tom Sikes in the pit; and compares Othello to the black ship's cook in his white nightcap. When he comes to London, he and some messmates take a hackney-coach, full of Bet Monsons and tobacco-pipes, and go through the streets smoking and lolling out of the window."

This is the seaman as he has come down to us by the artists and writers of his period: the portrait is complete only when literature and art are allowed to supplement each other in forming a composite picture. And the result has every appearance of being true and faithful to type. The unfortunate fact remains that landsmen have always judged the seaman by his behaviour when ashore; forgetting all the while that though the soldier going aboard a ship eases up a little and pushes his hat to the back of his head, the sailor from the moment he steps on to the deck pulls himself together and smartens up. He is about to resume the duties of his avocation, and away from the eyes of shore-dwellers who scarcely give a thought to consider how a man-of-war is handled at sea. When the

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sailor comes ashore, he is on leave and relaxes, often doing acts the very antithesis of his normal life afloat: but those inhabitants who exist in villages and cities mistake all this hilariousness for normality.

So in the days of which we are speaking the printsellers loved to publish, as the others insisted was a correct aspect, these pictures of the Jack Tar in his jovial just-come-on-leave mood. The same Laurie and Whittle in 1802 issued an aquatint in colours entitled *The Jolly Tars of Old England on a Land Cruise*, just because there was a demand for such a thing. And the collector will find plenty of these instances from other sources. Similarly the satirists did not hesitate to use engraving for the purpose of attacking admirals, naval administration and even naval costume: yet we always come back to those popular prints of "Jack Ashore," whose engravers and versifiers vary, but the sentiments are monotonously the same. This is a fair example of the words below the print of a well-kitted seaman of 1743, who is making the shore-dwellers take notice:

> From ship dismissed, their pockets full of pay,
> Thus the Tars squander years of toil away.

Below another print, belonging to 1791, of a tavern scene where the sailor with wig and buckle shoes is dancing with the landlady to the fiddler seated under the window, runs the rhyme:

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We sing a little and laugh a little,
And work a little and swear a little,
And fiddle a little and foot it a little,
And swig the flowing can.

There is such a sameness in this class of prints that we can almost imagine the engravers of this conventional, unimaginative age working to an identical set of instructions. It is as if the print-seller had said to each artist: "You must show a jovial sailor in his best shore-going kit, throwing his money about, the outstanding personality inside the tavern and full of good cheer. Everybody must be drinking and smoking, some civilian must be scraping a fiddle, and the sailor must be dancing to the admiration of the spectators." It was on this formula that the engravers seemed to work, varied only by that other formula which showed "Faithful Jack" at last home again fondling the most recently arrived infant which a loving wife tenderly extends to him. In this picture the sailor's faithful dog must be shown, together with either a boat or at least a ship-model, a general prevailing atmosphere of sunlit peace and serene contentment. Below the print, as if summing up the deserts of Jack, already possessed of his prize money and freedom, is added some such verse as this:

And so now to sea I shall venture no more,
For you know, being rich, I've no call,
So I'll bring up young Tars, do my duty ashore
And live and die constant to Poll.

The standard of humour, circa 1790, is well exemplified in the titles which accompanied the

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prints showing the seaman ashore in company with his women friends. Thus when he is out to paint the town red with the aid of some inamorata the printseller calls it *Jack Spritsail and his Nancy on a Cruise*; or if the circumstances are more demure, and the sailor is seen escorting a couple of charming damsels round the dockyard, he is *An Ocean Swell with Two Tenders*. But many of these prints, and the like, will be familiar to the reader, and there are plenty of sketches illustrative of the humorous side of naval life from the officer's point of view.

Leigh Hunt, after the picture quoted above concerning seamen ashore, attempts to give us further some idea of the naval officer who "does much of all this, only generally in higher taste. The moment he lands he buys quantities of jewellery and other valuables, for all the females of his acquaintance; and is taken in for every article. . . . He is nice in his watches and linen. He makes you presents of cornelians, antique seals, coco-nuts set in silver, and other valuables. When he shakes hands with you, it is like being caught in a windlass. He would not swagger about the streets in his uniform for the world.

"He is generally modest in company, though liable to be irritated by what he thinks ungentlemanly behaviour. . . . When the officer is superannuated or retires, he becomes, if intelligent and inquiring, one of the most agreeable old men in the world, equally welcome to the silent for his

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card-playing, and to the conversational for his recollections. . . . If not elevated by his acquirements above some of his humbler tastes, he delights in a corner-cupboard, holding his coco-nuts and punch bowl; has his summer-house castellated and planted with wooden cannon; and sets up the figure of his old ship, the *Britannia* or the *Lovely Nancy*, for a statue in the garden; where it stares eternally with red cheeks and round black eyes, as if in astonishment at its situation."

Among the early nineteenth-century prints there are not absent those which satirise and caricature even flag-officers, but if there was a good deal of inflated self-importance underlying some of these otherwise great personalities, which led to unfortunate incidents and most certainly was to the detriment of the service, yet this spirit was only brought to the fleet from the shore. Smollett in *Roderick Random* has given us a kind of footnote to the eighteenth-century prints in his word-picture of the brutal Captain Oakum, and of Commodore Trunnion whose anger knew no bounds when the newspaper contained the announcement that "Admiral Bower will very soon be created a British peer, for his eminent services during the war, particularly in his late engagement with the French fleet." Trunnion's jealous indignation, you will remember, expressed itself in such sentences as these: "I did not rise in the service by parliamenteering interest, or a handsome gunner of a wife. I was not hoisted over the backs of

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better men, nor strutted athwart the quarter-deck in a laced doublet, and thingumbobs at the wrists. Shake my limbs! I've been a hardworking man. . . ."

But we need not imagine this bitter feeling was either fictional or confined to any particular year, and we should bear this in mind when weighing up the truth or falsity of these caricatures and bitter gibes. In any walk of life where high honours are held out to the few, jealousy and bitterness are inevitable. And to substantiate this statement we have only to recollect that correspondence given in the "Spencer Papers" between Vice-Admiral Sir Alan Gardner, Bt., and Earl Spencer, First Lord of the Admiralty during the year 1800. If this sensitiveness to a slight was the predominating mood of flag-officers, can we wonder that the lampoonists took a delight in graving unkind and disrespectful pictures?

In April 1800, Earl St. Vincent was appointed to relieve Viscount Bridport as commander-in-chief of the Channel Fleet, having under him six flag-officers including Sir Alan Gardner. The latter was so infuriated and disappointed at not having received the command, that he wrote to Spencer complaining in no ambiguous terms, that this news "has mortified me exceedingly, and I have no doubt will completely humble and disgrace me in the eyes of the fleet." Spencer replied saying, "I was never more surprised in my life than at the contents of your letter," and added that St. Vincent by

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seniority and esteem was the natural successor to Bridport. In his second letter Gardner referred to this supersession as "uncommonly harsh treatment" "after a long and faithful service of forty-five years," and now "humbled in the eyes of the fleet." "What shall I say, my Lord, to my constituents in Westminster? and what will be the sentiments of the country in general respecting your Lordship's conduct to me upon this occasion I shall leave to your Lordship to judge."

In the next few days St. Vincent joined the fleet at sea, and again Gardner wrote a resentful letter to the First Lord against "the harsh, unusual, and severe treatment" and "the disgrace you have loaded me with, and the injury done to my character." He even expressed his feelings to St. Vincent, the new commander-in-chief, who wrote to Spencer on the same day of his own surprise at his attitude and offering to "cede the command to him, if upon his representations, which he told me were very strong, it should be judged fit to take measures to appease him. . . . I feel the agitation his mind is in will occasion a schism in the service, highly injurious to His Majesty's service."

Spencer replied to Gardner defending his own action and demanding to be told whether Gardner did or did not wish to serve under St. Vincent. Spencer had been under the impression that Gardner, owing to reasons of health, had never been wishful to become in

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supreme command. St. Vincent complained that Gardner's "conduct to me has been, and still continues, outrageous," and protested against "his rudeness." And so this unhappy condition of affairs went on, Gardner after repeating himself about being "very unhandsomely dealt with," did not decline to serve under St. Vincent; but less than three weeks later things had become so utterly impossible that St. Vincent wrote "either Sir Alan Gardner or I must retire from this squadron, or the King's service will suffer essentially."

The upshot of it all was that Spencer, seeing this intolerable situation, took the wise and judicious step of offering Gardner command of the Irish station which was about to become vacant, and it was accepted. This was approved by the King and so the matter ended. But this unpleasant affair, at a critical time when the fleet was busy watching Brest and the western approaches to the English Channel, might, as St. Vincent clearly hinted, have had serious consequences to our Navy. And the whole affair was entirely due to an attitude based on an excess of pride.

Therefore, as we look through these portraits and caricatures, we must consider them in relation to their own particular epoch and the existing social characteristics. In this way history becomes less a mass of isolated facts than a progress of events modified and restrained by human passions. Proceeding from character to deed much that

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seems inexplicable becomes clarified so soon as we understand what a certain naval officer will be likely to perform in a certain set of circumstances. Thus in our study of these prints there is something more than mere aesthetic enjoyment, for they are, when properly used, of great assistance in helping us to visualise and penetrate those great happenings which have meant so much to civilisation and commerce.

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X

NAVAL PRINTS AND NAVAL COSTUME

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CHAPTER X

NAVAL PRINTS AND NAVAL COSTUME

An additional interest to be found in these prints is the valuable information they afford of the costume worn by officers and men of the Royal Navy, but especially from about the year 1800 to the middle of the nineteenth century. There are aquatints in colours and lithographs in colours during these fifty years showing admirals, commodores, captains, commanders, masters of the fleet, lieutenants, midshipmen, physicians, pursers, captain's clerks, mates, gunners, boatswains, carpenters, and second-class boys. Most of these are the work either of John Augustus Atkinson, who drew and etched his own aquatints; or of L. Mansion, who co-operated with St. Eschauzier in the drawing on stone. There are also prints published by Ackermann and others.

There is, for example, a very rare set of eighteen lithographs in colour which were published by Englemann, Graf and Co., in 1828–30 and now are worth over £50. The lithographer was M. Gauci, and included are specimens from flag-rank down to what was known in those days as "common

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sailor," an expression which was also used in the Mercantile Marine, as we know from Clark Russell and other writers. Ackermann in 1848–9 published a set of six aquatints showing the ranks from admiral down to cadet and ratings to second-class boy. This was the work of R. H. C. Ubsdell and J. Harris. There are also prints illustrating officers, and men of the Royal Marines during the first fifty or sixty years of the nineteenth century, and these consist of such etchings in colours as by W. Heath, lithographs in colours by E. Hull, W. Sharpe, L. Mansion—St. Eschauzier; or aquatints in colour by H. de Daubrawa in collaboration with J. Harris, and C. H. Smith working with J. C. Stadler.

The coloured aquatint of *An Admiral and Midshipman* here reproduced shows the respective costumes as worn at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This picture was drawn and etched by J. A. Atkinson, and published by W. Miller of Albemarle-street and J. Walker of Conway-street, Fitzroy Square, in the year 1808. Atkinson was a London man, who lived from 1775 till after 1831, and besides being responsible for many plates also did a number of paintings in water-colours.

Up to this point I have used the expression naval "costume" advisedly, for it is to be noted that regular naval "uniform" is a custom that is not more than a hundred and eighty years old. Up till the middle of that reign of George II there was no uniformity, but invariability in accordance with the shore dress of the period. No better

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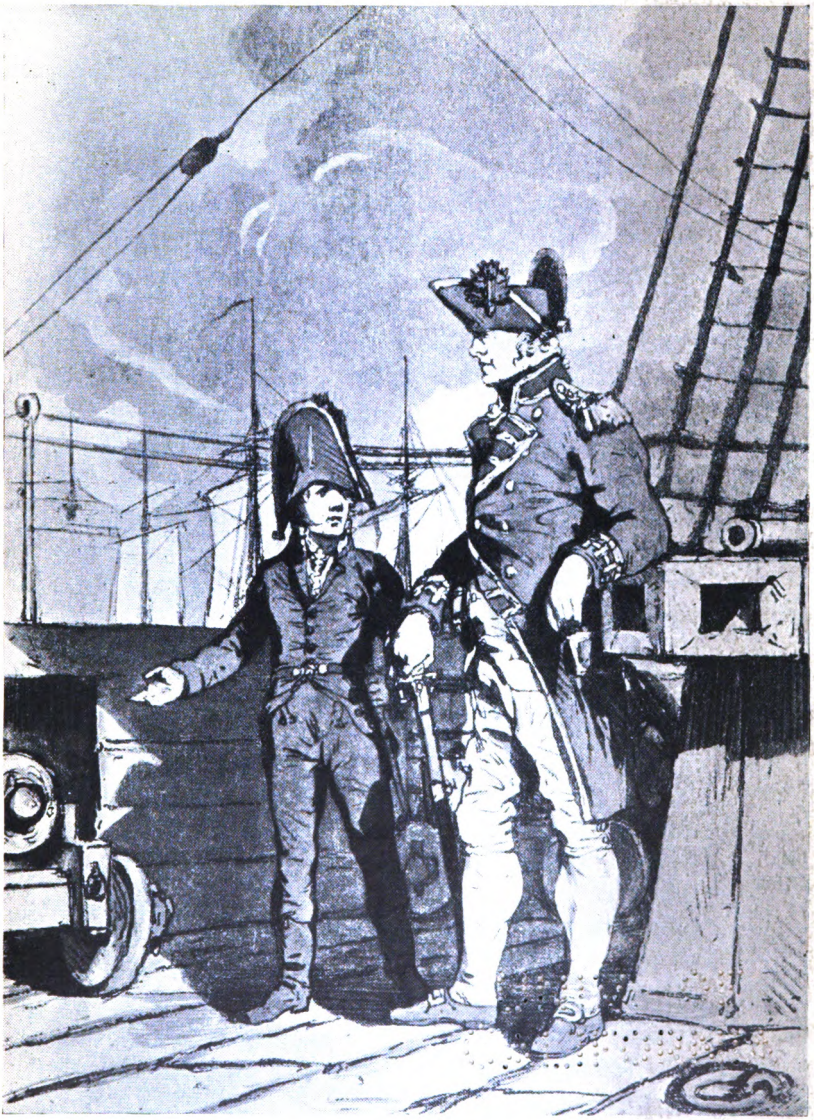

AN ADMIRAL AND MIDSHIPMAN OF 1808.

(*Coloured aquatint drawn and etched by J. A. Atkinson.*)

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illustration of this differing costume could be afforded than in the pictures at Greenwich already mentioned. We, who are so accustomed to the stereotyped dress of naval officers, are apt to forget that this has evolved only after centuries. At the beginning of the seventeenth century naval officers are shown in the costume of courtiers, and the prints bear this out. The contemporary print of Sir Francis Drake by an anonymous foreign engraver shows him with lace collar, right hand on beautifully chased helmet, and left hand resting on the sword at his side. Similarly a contemporary print of Howard of Effingham, Drake's commander-in-chief against the Armada, shows him not on board ship, but wearing a suit of armour on a prancing steed at the edge of a cliff with the ships sailing the sea below. The attitude was still that of a military officer commanding afloat.

Ferdinand Bol's picture of de Ruyter, on the other hand, made in 1667, shows the distinguished Dutch admiral with his arm leaning on a globe, a pair of callipers or compasses below, and a partially pulled curtain revealing shipping in the background. But the print of the time which shows Rooke presents him less as a sailor than a knight in shining armour with heavy flowing wig. Sandwich and Benbow have preferred to come down to posterity in armour likewise. Rodney, however, is seen in knee-breeches and cut-away coat; and St. Vincent likewise with epaulettes and three-cornered hat.

Before uniformity became the order, officers

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dressed as they liked. Blue was certainly not universal, the officers of H.M.S. *Kent*, for instance, in the year 1745 wearing grey and silver, faced with scarlet. There is a portrait in the Greenwich collection showing Admiral Vernon in a crimson coat. And Smollett, who served for a time in the Navy as surgeon's mate and took part in the Carthagena expedition (1740–1741), indicates that, on taking the *Renommé*, at least, scarlet was worn; for in *Peregrine Pickle* he makes the dying Commodore Trunnion remark: "As soon as the breath is out of my body, let minute guns be fired till I am safe under ground. I would also be buried in the red jacket I had on when I boarded and took the *Renummy*. . . . Let me be carried to the grave by my own men, rigged in the black caps and white shirts which my barge's crew were wont to wear."

The legend of adopting uniformity in pattern and colour is given as follows. When in the year 1747 this matter was being considered by George II, a certain admiral was sent for to the Admiralty concerning another matter, by the First Lord, the Duke of Bedford. "Being introduced into an apartment surrounded with various dresses, his opinion was asked as to the most appropriate. The admiral said blue or red, or red and blue, as these were our national colours. 'No,' replied his Grace, 'the King has determined otherwise, for, having seen my Duchess riding in the Park a few days ago in a habit of blue faced with white, the dress took

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the fancy of his Majesty, who has appointed it for the uniform of the Royal Navy.' " From that period, though the fashions of naval uniform have been modified by the varying changes of the day, yet blue has remained the fundamental colour. In the Atkinson print just mentioned and here shown, the midshipman has a white shirt showing below the collar, and the rest of his uniform is blue. The admiral by his side has a blue and gold coat with white waistcoat, white knee-breeches and white stockings.

Michael Scott (1789–1835), the Scottish author who published his West Indian experiences in *Tom Cringle's Log*, which he followed up with *The Cruise of the Midge*, both still beloved by many readers of nautical literature, has given us several little pictures of contemporary naval uniform. In *Tom Cringle's Log*, when a corvette was sighted quite close-to, " we were so near, that I could with the naked eye distinctly see the faces of the men. There were at least 150 determined fellows at quarters, and clustered with muskets in their hands, wherever they could be posted to most advantage. There they were in groups about the ports (I could even see the captains of the guns examining the locks), in their clean white frocks and trousers, the officers of the ship, and the marines, clearly distinguishable by their blue or red jackets. *I could discern the very sparkle of the epaulets.*"

Similarly in *The Cruise of the Midge* he describes Commodore Sir Oliver Oakplank as follows: " The

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gallant old fellow was dressed in faded nankeen trousers, discoloured cotton stockings, shoes with corn-holes cut in the toes, an ill-washed and rumpled white Marseilles waistcoat, an old blue uniform coat, worn absolutely threadbare, and white and soapy at the seams and elbows; each shoulder being garnished with a faded gold-lace strap, to confine the epaulets when mounted, and that was only on a Sunday. His silk neckcloth had been most probably black *once*, but now it was a dingy brown; and he wore a most shocking bad hat—an old white beaver, with very broad rims, the snout of it fastened back to the crown with a lanyard of common spunyarn, buttoned up, as it were, like the *chapeaux* in Charles II's time, to prevent it flapping down over his eyes.

"Lieutenant Sprawl, the officer with whom he was walking and keeping up an animated conversation, was also in no small degree remarkable in his externals . . . his coat seemed to have been made to fit even a stouter person, for the shoulder-straps projected considerably beyond his shoulders, like the projecting eaves of a Swiss cottage. . . . He wore a curious *wee* hat, with scarcely any brim, the remains of the nap bleached by a burning sun, and splashed and matted together from the pelting of numberless showers and the washing up of many a salt-sea spray, but carefully garnished, nevertheless, with a double stripe of fresh gold-lace, and a naval button on the left side. Add to this, an old-fashioned uniform coat, very far *through*,

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as we say; long-waisted, with remarkably short skirts, but the strap for the epaulet new and bright as the loop on the hat. Now, then, swathe him in a dingy white kerseymere waistcoat, over which dangles a great horn eyeglass, suspended by a magnificent new broad watered black ribbon; and finally, take the trouble to shroud the lower limbs of the Apollo in ancient duck trousers, extending about half-way down the calf of the leg, if calf he had; leaving his pillar-like ankles conspicuously observable; and you will have a tolerably accurate idea of the presence and bearing of our amiable and accomplished shipmate, Mr. Davis Sprawl."

Atkinson's print will be seen to indicate that smartness in naval uniform was hardly existent if we omit the contrast between blue and gold: it was enough that an unvarying standard was now being aimed at, and the service was dressing according to pattern. The rest was to come later. And in passing it will not be out of place if we call attention to those two services which were semi-naval and collateral with the senior service: the uniformed officers of the Revenue cutters and the Honourable East India Company's ships, respectively.

In the Revenue service naval officers holding appointments as Inspecting Officers of cruisers, Chief Officers of stations, and Mates of these cruisers, wore the regulation great-coat with epaulettes, cap, side-arms. The cruisers were, of course, sailing craft, cutter rigged, and their captains, if not naval

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officers, wore a blue lapel coat, buttoned back with nine Coastguard-uniform buttons and notched button-holes, plain blue stand-up collar with gold lace loop and button on each side thereof, the loop being five inches long and the lace three-quarters of an inch wide. On each cuff and pocket were three buttons and notched button-holes, as well as three buttons in the folds of each skirt. The waistcoat was white or blue kerseymere, with uniform buttons, white or blue pantaloons or trousers, with boots, a blue cloth cap similar in shape to those worn in the Royal Navy, with two bands of gold lace three-quarters of an inch broad, one at the top and the other at the bottom of the headpiece. The sword had a plain lace knot and fringe tassel, with a black leather belt. White trousers were worn on all occasions of inspection and on other special occasions between the twenty-third of April and the fourteenth of October.

William Heath, who in 1827 did an engraving in colours by way of a satire on naval costume of the day and entitled it *Things as they were in* 1757; *things as they are*, 1827, has also left us contemporary pictures of the Preventive man whose duty it was to patrol the beach, and of the seamen who served aboard these Revenue cutters. The Royal Academician, George Jones, who died in 1869, has also illustrated smugglers and coastguardsmen, but belonging to the year 1840. As throwing light on a service that no longer exists, these are worth

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collecting, but Heath also did many humorous sketches of naval life.

In that much-sought-after service of the Honourable East India Company, which differed so slightly from the Royal Navy, the utmost regard was paid to maintain rank and dignity. The full uniform for a commanding officer of one of the company's vessels consisted of a fine blue coat, with black Genoa velvet round the cuffs, four holes by two's, three outside, one inside. There were black velvet lapels, with ten holes by two's. The cape was of black velvet panteen with one hole at each side. The buttonholes were gold-embroidered throughout, and the gilt buttons bore the company's crest. The mates each wore a blue coat with black velvet lapels, cuffs and collar, with one, two, three or four small buttons to each cuff according to their rank as chief, second, third, or fourth officer. It was one of the company's rules that officers were to appear in their correct uniform when attending on the Court of Directors, their committees, any of the Presidents and Councils in India, or at St. Helena, or the Select Committee of Supra-cargoes in China.

Some of the officers in this East India service when they came up to be sworn-in before the Court of Directors did not always appear in the proper uniform, and the company were compelled to issue warning against coming into their presence wearing boots, black breeches and stockings, except in the case of deep mourning. Full uniform was

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to be worn when appearing before the Court of Directors, and undress when attending the committee. We have pictorial representation of these Merchant Service officers from the prints of their portraits by contemporary engravers. There is a print by W. Ridley, for instance, showing Sir William James, Bt., who was Commodore in the Honourable East India Company, and died in the year 1783. The print by J. Heath shows Captain Henry Wilson, who was wrecked in the *Antelope* and so discovered the Pelew Islands in 1783. Of Captain Hon. Richard Walpole, who commanded the company's ship *New Houghton*, which was wrecked off Margate in 1752, there is a print by W. Ridley also. And of Commodore Sir Nathaniel Dance, that gallant East India Company's officer who saved a valuable convoy of East Indiamen from Admiral Linois's French squadron, there are prints by J. Fittler and C. Knight showing him both in plain dress and in uniform.

Thus of the three sea services we have pictorial and reliable information which cannot be estimated lightly, since two of these have long since passed away and the third has undergone such important changes in every possible respect. And as showing that this alteration has by no means been confined to the ships themselves let us call attention to the lithograph in colours which is here reproduced. This was designed and drawn by L. Mansion and St. Eschauzier, coloured by C. H. Martin, and published by Andrews & Co. Here we have

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CAPTAIN, FLAG OFFICER AND COMMANDER OF 1833.
(*Coloured lithograph designed and drawn by L. Mansion and St. Eschauzier.*)

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the uniform of a captain, flag-officer and commander of the year 1833, showing the blue uniform with gold stripes, gold epaulettes and buttons, but white gloves and white trousers. It is the caps which will immediately attract the reader's notice. Like that costume plate by Atkinson, this lithograph forms one of a set of twelve. But if the officers of the Royal Navy did not get uniformity in dress until after 1747, this rigid custom did not come to the seamen until after the war with Russia in 1855. On the other hand there was some attempt at a standardised dress peculiar to each particular ship in accordance with the preference of an individual captain, or an admiral would dress his barge's crew alike. Thus five years before officers' uniform was established the barge's crew of Anson's flagship wore scarlet jackets, blue silk vests and silver badges on their arms.[1]

As we can see from prints of the period, an officer who had been round the world with Anson in 1740–44, and had nowcome ashore, wore knee-breeches, buckle shoes and three-cornered hat as part of his dress, which was similar to the shore costume of that date. The essential feature of the first standardisation of naval costume was less a matter of cut or pattern than uniformity in colour, buttons and marks of rank. Just as during the last stages of the Great War, after the United

[1] For information presented in the rest of this chapter I am much indebted to *The British Fleet*, by Commander C. N. Robinson, R.N. London, 1896. Chapter VII.

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States Navy had begun to serve alongside the British Navy, there gradually grew up a body of opinion among American naval officers that a modification of uniform on the lines of that worn by British officers would be desirable; just as this unofficial feeling was followed a few months later by the official promulgation of the change, so it had been at first with regard to the first uniforms in our own service.

For as early as 1745 there had been a desire among our naval officers of executive rank that commissioned officers should have a uniform dress. Lord Anson took a keen interest in the subject. Then came the choice of colours (as already related) by George II himself; and finally on April 13, 1748, the instruction was issued "in order the better to distinguish the rank of sea officers, to establish a military clothing for admirals, captains, commanders, and lieutenants, and judging it also necessary that persons acting as midshipmen should likewise have an uniform clothing, in order to their carrying the appearance which is necessary to distinguish their class to be in the rank of gentlemen, and give them better credit and figure in executing the commands of their superior officers." For some time the general adoption of the uniform—patterns for which had been sent to the Navy Office and the dockyards—was practically confined to flag-officers and captains.

Now, fortunately, there are preserved in the Royal United Service Museum the first uniforms,

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under this regulation, for (*a*) captains of three years seniority, (*b*) captains of under three years, and (*c*) lieutenants. These exhibits (numbered 2403–5), which were presented by the Admiralty, are worthy of study, especially as they will make our collecting of prints more interesting still. We see that the hats were three-cornered and had cockades as introduced by George I. In that same museum are the cocked hat actually worn by Nelson at the Battle of Copenhagen, 1801, and a foul weather cocked hat with waterproof crown which he wore aboard the *Victory*. The cockade in the hat is still there as we see it in so many old prints of admirals. Those who care to pursue the subject of uniform detail still further will find in this same museum one of the two uniform coats which Nelson used to wear in the *Victory*, together with a uniform waistcoat. But if we go down to the Greenwich collection we shall see the actual coat and waistcoat which Nelson wore at Trafalgar, together with the breeches and stockings and velvet stock and pigtail. So also we can inspect the coat he wore at the Battle of the Nile. Thus we have excellent evidence by which we may compare the prints showing Nelson in uniform.

The regulation of 1748 was modified in 1767, and again in 1774 and 1783, and we are indebted to the prints after Thomas Stothard which assist us to visualise the appearance of eighteenth-century naval officers. Thomas Stothard, who lived from 1755 till 1834, did a considerable amount of work,

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both as an illustrator of publications; and as a painter he is to be esteemed less for his originality than for his fidelity and technical skill, which is exactly what we at present desire. In 1779 he was sent by George III to Portsmouth in order to paint a picture of Prince William whilst serving aboard the *Prince George* as midshipman; and from this we are able to see the first authorised midshipman's uniform. But Stothard painted also some of the crew on the *Prince George's* forecastle, and this picture, which was engraved by Ward, shows the seamen's dress of the date mentioned. Stothard has painted Prince William in a blue coat, white waistcoat, knee-breeches and buckle shoes, with a three-cornered hat nearby. The dress of 1767 is shown in the uniform of the admiral on the midshipman's right hand.

The varying nature of the regulations issued explains the alterations of uniform which we find during the ensuing years manifested in these prints. And we must not forget that just as the United States naval uniform was influenced during the twentieth century by ours, so in this late eighteenth century the dress of French and Spanish naval officers certainly caused an element of change in their rivals' service. And, speaking of other nationalities, there is an engraving by J. B. Longacre after a painting by C. W. Peale, which shows Paul Jones, who served in the navies of France and Russia, whose remains now lie in a crypt of the Naval Academy's chapel at Annapolis, as America's

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first naval hero. This print presents him in a three-cornered hat, wearing a uniform coat, with epaulettes and some decoration in the shape of a star. The buttons of his coat are each marked with an anchor.

It was not till 1783 that British flag-officers displayed on their white cuffs the distinctive marks of their rank, with three rows of embroidery for a full admiral, two for a vice-admiral, and one for a rear-admiral in the case of full-dress. But for undress uniform of blue cloth with blue cuffs and lapels, the button-holes showed the difference; an admiral's being at equal distance apart, a vice-admiral's being arranged by threes, and a rear-admiral's by twos. There is a delightful picturesqueness about the portraits of these uniformed admirals in full dress, and some of these prints fetch considerable prices nowadays. There is, for example, that delightful mezzotint of Rodney by G. Dupont after Gainsborough which shows the vanquisher of de Grasse standing on the quarter-deck in dress uniform with short lace cuffs and star over his left breast. This print changes hands at twenty guineas. There are other Rodney prints showing the admiral in uniform, such as that mezzotint by W. Dickinson after Sir Joshua Reynolds, or that by V. Green displaying him in hat and uniform and drawn sword.

Further modifications were made in 1787, lace taking the place of embroidery on the cuffs of flag-officers, and uniform was standardised for

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warrant-officers—who, by the way, included surgeons and pursers—and master's mates. Epaulettes had been uniform for some time in the navies of France and Spain, and they had been worn by some naval officers of the British service, but it was not until 1795 that they wore authorised uniform. In that fine mezzotint by John Raphael Smith after G. Stuart, published two years after this regulation, we have a whole-length portrait of St. Vincent standing on the seashore in uniform, hat in hand, with epaulettes on his shoulders. But there are other prints of this great admiral which also depict him in uniform, such as those by W. Greatbatch after Hoppner. Of Nelson in uniform there are prints too numerous even to mention, and he is seen with his orders, his epaulettes and anchor-marked buttons. This uniform for executive officers continued until 1812, when among other changes a crown was placed over the anchor of the button. All captains and commanders were allowed two epaulettes, but lieutenants one epaulette on the right shoulder.

In 1825 pantaloons of white or blue cloth were allowed to be worn, but it was not till a couple of years later that full dress was abolished and knee-breeches were worn only at Drawing-Rooms. The cap-badge was introduced in 1856, the executive curl followed seven years later, and in 1877 was prescribed the additional half-stripe which is now worn by lieutenant-commanders. Beyond this date we need not follow the subject: our immediate

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concern has been to show how naval uniform in its origin and development has been expressed in these old prints. It is in this respect that plates of naval costumes, but also most prints of naval portraits, have a value far above what is immediately obvious, and trace the fluctuation of Admiralty policy through a long period when the Royal Navy as a career for gentlemen was esteemed far more highly than at the time of the Anglo-Dutch wars. It had attained a dignity which required a distinctive and even demonstrative dress in order to uphold both its internal discipline and respectful attention outside the service.

Thus, whether under the general heading of Naval Prints we confine our collection to portraits, costumes, ships, battles, caricatures, or all five, we shall find in them not merely one of the most delightful of hobbies, not only a splendid investment, but a special kind of education in a department of history that has been so rich in associations, so full of incident and so brilliant in results. Print collecting is a recreation as well for the poor man as for the rich, and there can be no doubt as to the ultimate pleasure, seeing that good impressions are becoming yearly so scarce.

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